



# “SCOOP”

## ARKANSAS FARM SERVICE AGENCY - - STATE OFFICE

April 2014

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Promissory Note.....	2
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).....	2
Emergency Conservation Program (ECP).....	2
Emergency Forest Restoration Program (EFRP).....	2
Tree Assistance Program (TAP).....	2
Early Registration for FSA Programs.....	3
Extension of Milk Income Loss Contract Program.....	4
Soybean Request for Referendum.....	5
Crop Marketing Assistance Loans & Loan Deficiency Payments.....	5
2014 Commodity Loan Rates.....	6
Prevented Planted Provisions.....	6
Failed Acreage Provisions.....	6
Selected Interest Rates for March 2014.....	7
Program Deadlines .....	8

### **Promissory Note**

Farm Service Agency (FSA) is required to offset payments that otherwise would be made to producers/borrowers who owe Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) unless the borrower can present an acceptable plan to resolve the delinquency in the form of a promissory note.

- Producers may request an installment agreement following receipt of the initial notification letter.
- Debts that have been referred to Treasury for collection through cross-servicing are excluded from consideration, but the request may be submitted to Treasury.
- Each debt settlement request must be reviewed, and a determination made, on whether the request should be approved, recommended for approval, or denied.
- After FSA or CCC agree to a settlement request, in writing, subsequent collections or payments should be applied according to the agreement.
- The proposed payment schedule should be regular, such as monthly, quarterly, semiannually, or annually, except in unusual circumstances.
- The amount of each payment should be regular and at least \$50 per month or \$600 per year, except in unusual circumstances.
- The promissory note should bear interest at the basic late payment interest rate in effect from the date it is signed.

### **Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)**

FSA's authority to accept or approve offers ended September 30, 2013, this continues until the National Agricultural Act of 2014 Farm Bill is implemented.

### **Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)**

If you have been approved and funded for assistance under a Disaster ID, please be mindful of the expiration date for implementing the practice(s) for which you applied.

### **Emergency Forest Restoration Program (EFRP)**

If you have been approved and funded for assistance under a Disaster ID, please be mindful of the expiration date for implementing the practice(s) for which you applied.

### **Tree Assistance Program (TAP)**

The National Agricultural Act of 2014 authorizes Tree Assistance Program (TAP) as a permanent program. TAP provides assistance to eligible orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate bushes, vines, and trees, including nursery, ornamental, fruit, nut, or Christmas trees that were lost or damaged because of a natural disaster. The previous Farm Bill TAP program authorization expired on September 30, 2011. The County Office personnel will be receiving training for an upcoming sign-up. More information will be released as it comes available. Check with your County Office in the next few weeks for updates.

## **USDA Encourages Early Registration for FSA Programs**

WASHINGTON, March 21, 2014 — The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) Administrator Juan M. Garcia today recommended that farmers and ranchers who plan to participate in FSA programs register in advance. Producers are encouraged to report farm records and business structure changes to a [local FSA Service Center](#) before April 15, 2014.

Enrollment for the disaster programs authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill, including the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) and the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) will begin by April 15, 2014.

"We expect significant interest in these programs," said Garcia. "Early registration should help improve the sign-up process and allow us to expedite implementation of the programs. I strongly encourage producers to complete their paperwork ahead of time."

Examples of updates or changes to report include:

- New producers or producers who have not reported farm records to FSA.
- Producers who have recently bought, sold or rented land. Those producers need to ensure that changes have been reported and properly recorded by local FSA county office personnel. Reports of purchased or sold property should include a copy of the land deed, and if land has been leased, then documentation should be provided that indicates the producer had/has control of the acreage.
- Producers that have changed business structures (e.g. formed a partnership or LLC) need to ensure that these relationships and shares are properly recorded with FSA. Even family farms that have records on file may want to ensure that this is recorded accurately as it may impact payment limits.

Farm records can be updated during business hours at FSA Service Centers that administer the county where the farm or ranch is located. Producers can contact their local FSA Service Center in advance to find out what paperwork they may need. In addition, bank account information should be supplied or updated if necessary to ensure that producers receive payments as quickly as possible through direct deposit.

While any producer may report farm records and business structure changes, it is especially important for producers who suffered livestock, livestock grazing, honeybee, farm-raised fish, or tree/vine losses for 2011, 2012, 2013, or 2014, and may be eligible for assistance through one of the four disaster programs.

For further information about our disaster programs and USDA's Farm Bill implementation plan, visit FSA's [2014 Farm Bill Web page](#). FSA Service Center locations can be found on the [FSA website](#).

## **USDA Announces the Extension of the Milk Income Loss Contract Program for 2014**

WASHINGTON, March 28, 2014 — U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) Administrator Juan M. Garcia today announced the extension of the Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) program.

The extended MILC protects dairy farmers enrolled in the program against income loss through Sept. 1, 2014, or until a new Margin Protection Program for dairy producers (MPP), established by the 2014 Farm Bill, is operational.

Contracts for eligible producers enrolled in MILC on or before Sept. 30, 2013, are automatically extended until the termination date of the MILC program. Dairy operations with approved MILC contracts will continue to receive monthly payments if a payment rate is in effect.

MILC compensates enrolled dairy producers when the Boston Class I milk price falls below \$16.94 per hundredweight (cwt), after adjustment for the cost of dairy feed rations. MILC payments are calculated each month using the latest milk price and feed cost, just as in the 2008 Farm Bill. The payment rate for October 2013 through January 2014 marketing is zero. Payment rates during the months after January 2014 until the termination of the MILC program will be determined as the appropriate data becomes available.

Since MILC payments are limited to a maximum amount of milk production each fiscal year, dairy operations may select a production start month other than October 2013 (the start of fiscal year 2014). Producers who want to select a different production start month must visit their local FSA office between April 14, 2014, and May 30, 2014.

FSA will provide producers with information on program requirements, updates and sign-ups as the information becomes available. For more information on MILC, contact a local FSA county office or visit the FSA website at [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

## **USDA Sets Date for Soybean Request for Referendum**

WASHINGTON, March 4, 2014 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced that it will offer soybean producers the opportunity to request a referendum on the Soybean Promotion and Research Order (Order), as authorized under the Soybean Promotion, Research, and Consumer Information Act (Act).

The Act requires the Secretary of Agriculture to conduct a Request for Referendum every 5 years after the initial referendum, which was conducted in 1994. The last Request for Referendum was conducted in 2009. Soybean producers who are interested in having a referendum to determine whether to continue the Soybean Checkoff Program are invited to participate.

The Request for Referendum will be conducted at USDA's county Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices. To be eligible to participate, producers must certify and provide documentation that shows that they produced soybeans and paid an assessment on the soybeans during the period of Jan. 1, 2012, through Dec. 31, 2013.

Beginning May 5 and continuing through May 30, 2014, producers may obtain a form by mail, fax, or in person from the FSA county offices. Forms may also be obtained via the internet at

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/SoybeaninformationontheSoybeanRequestforReferendum> during the same time period. Individual producers and other producer entities may request a referendum at the county FSA office where their administrative farm records are maintained. For the producer not participating in FSA programs, the opportunity to request a referendum will be provided at the county FSA office where the producer owns or rents land. Completed forms and supporting documentation must be returned to the appropriate county FSA office by fax or in person no later than close of business May 30, 2014; or if returned by mail, must be postmarked by midnight May 30, 2014, and received in the county FSA office by close of business on June 5, 2014.

USDA will conduct a referendum if at least 10 percent of the nation's 569,998 soybean producers support a referendum. Not more than one-fifth of the producers who support having a referendum can be from any one State.

The Soybean Checkoff Program is administered by a 70-member producer board and is designed to expand uses of soybeans and soybean products in domestic and foreign markets. The national Soybean Checkoff Program is financed by a mandatory assessment of one-half of 1 percent of the net market price of soybeans.

Notice of the Request for Referendum will be published in the March 4, 2014, Federal Register. For more information, contact James Brow, Research and Promotions Branch; Livestock, Poultry and Seed Program, AMS, USDA; STOP 0251 - Room 2610-S; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW; Washington, D.C. 20250-0251; tel. (202) 720-0633; or via the Internet at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/SoybeaninformationontheSoybeanRequestforReferendum>.

### **The Agricultural Act Of 2014 Authorizes 2014 Through 2018 Crop Marketing Assistance Loans And Loan Deficiency Payments**

The 2014 Farm Bill authorizes 2014 through 2018 crop MAL's and LDP's on rice, cotton, corn, wheat, soybeans, grain sorghum, honey, oats, peanuts, graded and non-graded wool, mohair, barley, canola, crambe, dry peas, flaxseed, large chickpeas, small chickpeas, lentils, mustard seed, rapeseed, safflower, sesame seed, and sunflower seed. County FSA Offices are authorized to accept MAL and LDP requests for eligible 2014 harvested or shorn commodities immediately.

An eligible producer is a person or legal entity that has complied with annual program requirements, including:

- reporting acreage for all cropland on a farm
- completing form AD-1026 for conservation compliance
- having beneficial interest in the eligible commodity
- sharing in the risk of producing the eligible commodity
- meeting average adjusted gross income (AGI) provisions – producers whose average AGI exceeds \$900,000 are not eligible to receive a marketing loan gain or LDP; however, producers will still be allowed to receive MAL's but the MAL must be repaid at principal plus interest.

States, local Governments, political subdivisions, and agencies thereof, including public schools, are not eligible to obtain marketing assistance loans or LDP's.

Eligible loan commodities must have been produced by an eligible producer on a farm.

The total amount of payments received, directly or indirectly, by a person or legal entity (except a joint venture or general partnership) for any crop year for Price Loss Coverage (new program replacing DCP), Agricultural Risk Coverage, marketing loan gains or LDP payments for all loan-eligible commodities other than peanuts, may not exceed \$125,000. A person or legal entity that receives payments for peanuts has a separate \$125,000 payment limitation for Price Loss Coverage, Agricultural Risk Coverage, marketing loan gains, and LDP's. Note: Since the 2008 crop year, there has not been a payment limitation for marketing loan gains and LDP's. This is a change from the previous farm bill. For more information, contact your local FSA office.

### **2014 LOAN RATES**

Commodity loan rates may be found on the PSD web site at:

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=home&subject=prsu&topic=landing>

### **PREVENTED PLANTED PROVISIONS**

Producers should report prevented planted acreage to their local FSA Office when the crop acreage is not planted due to disaster-related conditions.

- **To be considered timely filed, prevented planted acres should be reported no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date established by Federal Crop Insurance.**
- Final planting dates are provided in this SCOOP titled "Program Deadlines."

### **FAILED ACREAGE PROVISIONS**

Producers should report failed crop acres to their local FSA Office when the crop failed due to disaster related conditions. To be timely filed the failed acreage shall be reported to FSA before the crop is destroyed. County Committee review and action is required to receive history credit in accordance with applicable rules and regulations. The County Committee may require the office to conduct a field visit for crop residue and verification.

**Selected Interest Rates for  
April 2014**

90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	2.000%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	4.000%
Farm Ownership Loans, Direct Down Payment, Beginning farmer or Rancher	1.500%
Farm Ownership Loans Direct Joint Financing	2.500%
Emergency Loans Actual Loss	3.000%
Farm Storage Facility Loans 7 years	2.125%
Farm Storage Facility Loans 10 years	2.750%
Farm Storage Facility Loans 12 years	2.875%
Sugar Storage Facility Loans	3.125%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	1.125%

## PROGRAM DEADLINES

<b><u>Final</u> date to inform FSA of crop losses</b>	<b>Before Crop Disposition</b>
<b><u>Final</u> date to file prevented planted acreage/credit for Corn</b>	<b>May 10, 2014</b>
<b><u>Final</u> date to report Tomatoes crop</b>	<b>May 15, 2014</b>
<b><u>Final</u> date to file prevented planted acreage/credit for Grain Sorghum</b>	<b>May 30, 2014</b>
<b>2013 Final Marketing Assistance Loan Availability Dates</b> Rice, Upland cotton, Corn Grain Sorghum, Soybeans	<b>May 31, 2014</b>
<b><u>Final</u> date to file prevented planted acreage/credit for Upland Cotton for: Clay, Craighead, Crittenden, Cross, Greene, Jackson, Lawrence, Mississippi, Poinsett, St. Francis, White, and Woodruff Counties</b>	<b>June 4, 2014</b>
<b><u>Final</u> date to file prevented planted acreage/credit for Rice</b>	<b>June 9, 2014</b>
<b><u>Final</u> date to file prevented planted acreage/credit for Upland Cotton for: Arkansas, Ashley, Bradley, Chicot, Clark, Dallas, Desha, Drew, Jefferson, Lafayette, Lee, Lincoln, Little River, Lonoke, Miller, Monroe, Phillips, Prairie, and Pulaski Counties</b>	<b>June 9, 2014</b>
<b><u>Final</u> date to file prevented planted acreage/credit for Peanuts</b>	<b>June 9, 2014</b>
<b><u>Final</u> date to file prevented planted acreage/credit for Soybeans Not Following Another Crop (NFAC)</b>	<b>June 30, 2014</b>
<b><u>Final</u> date to file prevented planted acreage/credit for Soybeans Following Another Crop (FAC)</b>	<b>July 10, 2014</b>
<b><u>Final</u> date to Report 2014 Spring Seeded Crops</b> (Note crop insured under the NAP Program may have an earlier acreage reporting date. Check with your local county office for verification.)	<b>July 15, 2014</b>

“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 Avenue, 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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