

Oct. 6, 2014



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Montana FSA: October 2014 eNewsletter

USDA Montana Farm Service Agency (FSA)

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Montana agricultural producers invited to Farm Bill Meetings

28 informational meetings across the state from Oct. 15 to Nov. 12 to cover important new Farm Bill programs

USDA Farm Service Agency, in partnership with the USDA Risk Management Agency and Montana State University, will host a series of 28 informational meetings to discuss important new programs authorized by the Agricultural Act of 2014. These meetings will focus on the Price Loss Coverage (PLC) and Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC) that will be administered by FSA and the Supplemental Coverage Option (SCO) administered by RMA through federal crop insurance providers. MSU Extension will explain the new online Farm Bill Decision Tool that is available to assist producers in understanding their options for their operations.

The 2014 Farm Bill authorizes three FSA program election options: PLC, ARC-County (ARC-CO) and ARC-Individual (ARC-IC). Producers must make a one-time decision to retain or reallocate crop bases, to retain or update program payment yields and select the type of coverage (price protection, county revenue protection, and/or individual revenue protection) for the 2014-18 crop years.

The public can attend any of the following meetings:

Oct. 15: **Belgrade**, 8 a.m. to noon, Holiday Inn Express (309 West Madison Ave.)

Oct. 16: **Helena**, 2-6 p.m., Upper Conference Room Extension Office at

Reasonable

Accommodations:

People with disabilities who require accommodations to participate in FSA programs should contact the County Executive Director in the FSA Office in your area or Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339. Alternatively, you may also contact Montana FSA Civil Rights Coordinator Jennifer Cole at (406) 587-6786 or jennifer.cole@mt.usda.gov

Fairgrounds (98 West Custer Ave.)

Oct. 17: **Ronan**, 8 a.m. to noon, Ronan Community Center (300 3rd Ave., NW)

Oct. 17: **Missoula**, 2-6 p.m., Guesthouse Inn and Suites Conference Center Meeting Room (3803 Brooks Street)

Oct. 20: **Miles City**, 2-6 p.m., Miles City Community College, Room 106 (2715 Dickinson St.)

Oct. 21: **Sidney**, 8 a.m. to noon, Extension Office Conference Room (1499 N. Central Ave.)

Oct. 21: **Plentywood**, 2-6 p.m., Jubilee Room at the Courthouse (100 W. Laurel Ave.)

Oct. 22: **Glasgow**, 8 a.m. to noon, Cottonwood Inn (45 1st Ave. NE)

Oct. 22: **Wolf Point**, 2-6 p.m., Fort Peck Community College Dumont Building (301 Benton St.)

Oct. 23: **Circle**, 8 a.m. to noon, McCone County Fairgrounds Community Building (Half Mile SW of Circle on Highway 200)

Oct. 23: **Glendive**, 2-6 p.m., Dawson County Courthouse Community Room (207 W. Bell St.)

Oct. 24: **Baker**, 8 a.m. to noon, Fallon County Fairground Exhibit Hall (3440 Highway 7)

Oct. 27: **Choteau**, 2-6 p.m., Stage Stop Inn Conference Room (1005 Main Ave. N)

Oct. 28: **Browning**, 9 a.m. to noon, Blackfeet Tribal Conference Room (Located in Roland Kennerly Building – New addition NW of the Main Blackfeet Tribal Office)

Oct. 28: **Shelby**, 2-6 p.m., Coyote Club & Events Center (137 Main St.)

Oct. 29: **Conrad**, 8 a.m. to noon, Conrad High School Auditorium (308 South Illinois)

Oct. 29: **Great Falls**, 2-6 p.m., (Montana Expo Park [State Fairgrounds] – Trades and Industries Building 400 3rd St. NW)

Oct. 30: **Fort Benton**, 8 a.m. to noon, Ag Center (1205 20th St.)

Oct. 30: **Havre**, 2-6 p.m., MSU-Northern Student Union Ballroom (300 West 11th St.)

Oct. 31: **Malta**, 8 a.m. to noon, Great Northern Hotel (2 S 1st St. E)

Nov. 3: **Lame Deer**, 2-6 p.m., Chief Dull Knife College, Room 205 (1 College Dr.)

Nov. 4: **Crow Agency**, 9 a.m. to noon, Little Big Horn College Cultural Center (8645 South Weaver Dr.)

Nov. 4: **Billings**, 2-6 p.m., Big Horn Resort and Convention Center (1801

Majestic Lane)

Nov. 5: **Harlowton**, 8 a.m. to noon, Kiwanis Youth Center Facility (204 Third St. NE)

Nov. 5: **Hobson**, 2-6 p.m., Bos Terra Feedlot Auditorium (342 Sale Barn Drive)

Nov. 6: **Rocky Boy Agency**, 9 a.m. to noon, Jon Morsette Vocational Technical Center (8294 Upper Box Elder Road, Box Elder)

Nov. 6: **Fort Belknap Agency**, 2-6 p.m., Aaniiih Nakoda College, Returning Buffalo Building, Room 209 (269 Blackfeet Avenue/Fort Belknap Agency)

Nov. 10: Informational Webinar Details TBA

Nov. 12: **Whitehall**, 2-6 p.m., Whitehall Community Center (11 North Division)

A printable Montana schedule, with local contact information, is available at: http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/2014mtusdamsufarmbillmtgs.pdf.

For more information, visit MSU Extension's Farm Bill website at <http://www.montana.edu/farmbill>, FSA's national Farm Bill website at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/farmbill>, Montana FSA's website at www.fsa.usda.gov/mt and RMA's national Farm Bill website at <http://www.rma.usda.gov/news/currentissues/farmbill/>.

Key Dates for New 2014 Farm Bill Safety Net Programs Announced

USDA announced key dates for farm owners and producers to keep in mind regarding the new 2014 Farm Bill established programs, Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC). The new programs, designed to help producers better manage risk, usher in one of the most significant reforms to U.S. farm programs in decades.

Dates associated with ARC and PLC that farm owners and producers need to know:

- **Sept. 29, 2014 to Feb. 27, 2015:** Land owners may visit their local Farm Service Agency office to update yield history and/or reallocate base acres.
- **Nov. 17, 2014 to March 31, 2015:** Producers make a one-time election of either ARC or PLC for the 2014 through 2018 crop years.
- **Mid-April 2015 through summer 2015:** Producers sign contracts for 2014 and 2015 crop years.
- **October 2015:** Payments for 2014 crop year, if needed.

USDA leaders will visit with producers across the country to share information and answer questions on the ARC and PLC programs.

Covered commodities include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium grain rice (which includes short grain rice), safflower seed, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat. Upland cotton is no longer a covered commodity.

Producers can contact their local FSA office for more information or to schedule an appointment.

ONLINE DECISION TOOLS: USDA helped create online tools to assist in the decision process, allowing farm owners and producers to enter information about their operation and see projections that show what ARC and/or PLC will mean for them under possible future scenarios. The new tools are now available at www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc. Farm owners and producers can access the online resources from the convenience of their home computer or mobile device at any time. For more information, visit: <http://www.montana.edu/farmland/>.

Livestock Disaster Assistance: Reminder of Nov. 1st ELAP Deadline for 2014 ELAP Applications

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

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

The enrollment deadline for the 2014 Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) is **Nov. 1, 2014**.

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 flooding, blizzards and wildfires. ELAP assistance is provided for losses not covered by LFP and LIP. For 2014 program year losses, the notice of loss and an application for payment must be submitted by **Nov. 1, 2014**.

A request to consider losses to mechanically harvested forage due to "excessive rain" (not flood) has been submitted to Washington DC for consideration. Many producers have reported losses of mechanically harvested forage that was stacked causing damage due to mold and toxins as well as causing spontaneous combustion when trying to manage and protect as much of the stacked hay as possible. Although the request has not been approved at this time, if producers suffered losses to their stacked hay due to excessive rain, producers shall file a notice of loss by **Nov. 1, 2014** to be considered eligible if the request is approved. There are no late-file provisions under the ELAP program.

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 an eligible adverse weather event, or 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.

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.

2015 Crop Acreage Reporting Dates for Montana

Nov. 17th Deadline for Reporting Fall Crops

Producers are reminded to file their 2015 acreage reports with their local FSA county office by the common acreage reporting deadlines of:

- **Nov. 17:** 2015 Acreage Reporting Deadline for Apiculture, Perennial Forage, Pasture, Rangeland & Forage (PRF) including Native grass, Fall Wheat (Hard Red Winter - HRW), and all other Fall-Seeded Small Grains
- **Jan. 2, 2015** – (or 30 days after placement of colonies) Honey covered under Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)
- **Jan. 15, 2015** – Cherries, Established Stand Alfalfa Seed, Fall Alfalfa Seed
- **July 15, 2015** – Spring Alfalfa Seed, Barley, Canola, Corn, Dry Beans, Dry Peas, Flax, Forage Seeding, Mustard, Spring Oats, Potatoes, Safflower, Sugar Beets, Sunflowers, Spring Wheat, Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), and all other crops

Please contact your local FSA office to obtain a copy of your 2015 acreage compliance maps or schedule an appointment to complete your crop certification. In order for your fall acreage report to be considered timely filed, and avoid possible late file fees, you must contact the office by Nov. 17, 2014.

Important Montana FSA Dates and Deadlines:

- **Oct. 13:** USDA Service Centers Closed for Federal Holiday (Columbus Day)
- **Nov. 1:** 2014 Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) Notice of Loss and Application for Payment Deadline
- **Nov. 3:** FSA County Committee Election ballots mailed to eligible voters
- **Nov. 12:** All Hay Bales Must be Removed from CRP Acres
- **Nov. 17:** 2015 Acreage Reporting Deadline for Apiculture, Perennial Forage, Pasture, Rangeland & Forage (PRF) including Native grass, Fall Wheat (Hard Red Winter - HRW), and all other Fall-Seeded Small Grains
- **Nov. 28:** Dairy Margin Protection Program Enrollment Deadline for 2014 and 2015
- **Dec. 1:** Last day to return voted ballots to the local FSA County Office
- **Dec. 1:** 2015 NAP Sales Closing Date for 2015 Honey Producers
- **Jan. 1:** Newly elected county committee members take office
- **Jan. 2:** 2015 Acreage Reporting Deadline (or 30 days after placement of colonies) Honey covered under NAP
- **Jan. 15:** 2015 Acreage Reporting Deadline for Cherries, Established Stand Alfalfa Seed, Fall Alfalfa Seed
- **Jan. 30:** 2011, 2012, 2013 & 2014 Livestock Forage Program (LFP), Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) Notice of Loss and Application for Payment Deadline
- **Jan 30:** Deadline to submit Tree Assistance Program (TAP) Application for Payment and Supporting Documentation for Loss for 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 (or 90 days after disaster event or loss was apparent)
- **Jan. 30:** Deadline to request early CRP contract termination

For more information, call or visit your local FSA county office.

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 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).