

July 2016



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## Wisconsin FSA Newsletter- July 2016

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### Wisconsin Farm Service Agency

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#### State Executive Director:

Patty Edelburg

#### State Committee:

Bill Averbeck  
George Huber  
Linda Ceylor  
Jamie Derr  
Mike Gallagher

#### Farm Loan Chief:

Tom Brandt

#### Farm Program

#### Chief/Executive Officer:

Russ Raeder

To find contact information for your local office go to

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

### One Minute Message from Patty Edelburg

The Farm Service Agency state management structure includes a State Executive Director, and a State Committee (STC). The State Committee is authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill and provides local input on program payments, loans, conservation programs, emergency programs, and production adjustment programs. They are experts from the farming industry; offering valuable insight and experience.

I am very excited to announce the appointment of three new State Committee members to the Wisconsin State Committee.

**Linda Ceylor**- Linda and her husband Gerald have been farming since 1990; they operate a 350 acre organic dairy farm in Catawaba, located in Price County. They started their operation in Washington State and due to urbanization, moved to Wisconsin in 1997. In 2003 the couple started transitioning to organic dairy farming. They became fully organic in 2007.

**Jamie Derr**- Jamie and his partner Kristin farm just outside of Marshall in Dane County. They operate 400 acres and grow corn, soybeans, winter wheat and canola for making cooking oil. Jamie began recycling used cooking oil from restaurants to make biodiesel and saw the need for a locally produced cooking oil. He now produces the oil from the canola seed on-farm with small seed presses. He operates the farm on his own with a little help from his retired father.

**Mike Gallagher**- Mike and his wife Pat, a retired teacher, have been farming in Lafayette County since 1976. Over the years they have maintained a farrow to finish hog and rotational grazing dairy operations along with growing grain and fresh market vegetable crops. Moving into semi-retirement, Mike and his wife have downsized to fewer than 90 acres and are focusing on various conservation efforts.

Please help me, along with current State Committee members Bill Averbeck and George Huber, welcome Linda, Jamie, and Mike to the Wisconsin State FSA Committee.

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## Dates to Remember

### August 1, 2016

Final date to sign 2016 ARC/PLC Enrollment Contracts

### August 1, 2016

Final date to submit nomination form FSA-669A for County Committee Election

### September 1, 2016

Deadline to purchase 2017 Non-insured Assistance Program (NAP) coverage on value loss crops, including ginseng, turf grass sod, aquaculture, and Christmas trees

### September 2, 2016

Final date to submit EQIP application to local NRCS office for 2017 funding

### September 5, 2016

All USDA Service Centers closed in observance of Labor Day

### September 30, 2016

Deadline to purchase 2017 Dairy Margin Protection Program (MPP) coverage

### September 30, 2016

Deadline to purchase 2017 Non-insured Assistance Program (NAP) coverage on crops including alfalfa, birdsfoot trefoil, clover, grasses, mixed forages, rhubarb, rye, triticale, vetch, and wheat

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## Deadline to Submit County Committee Nominations Aug. 1

The Wisconsin Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds farmers, ranchers and other agricultural producers that they have until Aug. 1, 2016, to nominate eligible candidates to serve on local FSA county committees.

FSA county committees help local farmers through their decisions on commodity price support loans, conservation programs and disaster programs, and by working closely with county executive directors.

To be eligible to hold office as a county committee member, individuals must participate or cooperate in a program administered by FSA, be eligible to vote in a county committee election and live in the local administrative area where they are running. A complete list of eligibility requirements, more information and nomination forms are available at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections>.

All nominees must sign the nomination form FSA-669A. All nomination forms for the 2016 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by close of business on Aug. 1, 2016. Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters by Nov. 7 and are due back to the local USDA Service Centers on Dec. 5. The newly elected county committee members will take office Jan. 1, 2017.

For more information, contact your local FSA Office: <http://offices.usda.gov>

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## Enrollment for 2016 ARC/PLC Coverage Ends Aug. 1

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) has announced that producers who chose coverage from the safety net programs established by the 2014 Farm Bill, known as the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or the Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs, must visit FSA county offices, to sign contracts to enroll in coverage for 2016 **before August 1, 2016**.

Although the choice between ARC and PLC is completed and remains in effect through 2018, producers must still enroll their farm by signing a contract each year to receive coverage.

Producers are encouraged to contact their local FSA office to schedule an appointment to enroll. If a farm is not enrolled during the 2016 enrollment period, producers on that farm will not be eligible for financial assistance from the ARC or PLC programs should crop prices or farm revenues fall below the historical price or revenue benchmarks established by the program.

The two programs were authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill and offer a safety net to agricultural producers when there is a substantial drop in prices or revenues for covered commodities. Covered commodities in Wisconsin include barley, canola, corn, flaxseed, grain sorghum, oats, dry peas, rapeseed, safflower, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat. For more details regarding these programs, go to [www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc).

For more information, producers are encouraged to contact their local office. To find your local office visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

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## Dairy Producers Can Enroll Today to Protect Milk Production Margins

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) in Wisconsin announced that dairy producers can enroll for 2017 coverage in the Margin Protection Program for Dairy (MPP-Dairy) after July 1. The voluntary program, established by the 2014 Farm Bill, provides financial assistance to participating dairy producers when the margin – the difference between the price of milk and feed costs – falls below the coverage level selected by the producer.

The Margin Protection Program gives participating dairy producers the flexibility to select coverage levels best suited for their operation. Enrollment begins July 1 and ends on Sept. 30, 2016, for coverage in calendar year 2017. Participating farmers will remain in the program through 2018 and pay a minimum \$100 administrative fee each year. Producers have the option of selecting a different coverage level during open enrollment each year.

USDA has a web tool to help producers determine the level of coverage under the Margin Protection Program that will provide them with the strongest safety net under a variety of conditions. The online resource, available at [www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool), allows dairy farmers to quickly and easily combine unique operation data and other key variables to calculate their coverage needs based on price projections. Producers can also review historical data or estimate future coverage needs, based on data projections. The secure site can be accessed via computer, smartphone or tablet 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

To complete enrollment, producers must make coverage elections during the enrollment period and pay the annual \$100 administrative fee that provides basic catastrophic protection that covers 90 percent of milk production at a \$4 margin coverage level. For additional premiums, operations can protect 25 to 90 percent of production history with margin coverage levels from \$4.50 to \$8, in 50 cent increments. Once enrolled, dairy operations are required to participate through 2018 by making coverage elections each year. If electing higher coverage for 2017, dairy producers can either pay the premium in full at the time of enrollment or pay 100 percent of the premium by Sept. 1, 2017. Premium fees may be paid directly to FSA or producers can work with their milk handlers to remit premiums on their behalf. Contact your local office to learn more about premium calculations and obtain application forms.

Also beginning July 1, 2016, FSA will begin accepting applications for intergenerational transfers, allowing program participants who added an adult child, grandchild or spouse to the operation during calendar year 2014 or 2015, or between Jan. 1 and June 30, 2016, to increase production history by the new cows bought into the operation by the new family members. For intergenerational transfers occurring on or after July 1, 2016, notification to FSA must be made within 60 days of purchasing the additional cows.

(Dairy continued)

Dairy operations enrolling in the new program must meet conservation compliance provisions and cannot participate in the Livestock Gross Margin Dairy Insurance Program.

For more information, visit FSA online at [www.fsa.usda.gov/dairy](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/dairy) or stop by a local FSA office to learn more about the Margin Protection Program. To find a local FSA office in your area, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

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## FSA Offers Youth Loans

County Fair season is in full swing here in Wisconsin. Did you know the Farm Service Agency makes loans to youth to establish and operate agricultural income-producing projects in connection with 4-H clubs, FFA and other agricultural groups?

Youth loans are a great way to obtain funds for various fair projects. Projects must be planned and operated with the help of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is \$5000.

Youth Loan Eligibility Requirements:

- Be a citizen of the United States (which includes Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) or a legal resident alien
- Be 10 years to 20 years of age
- Comply with FSA's general eligibility requirements
- Be unable to get a loan from other sources
- Conduct a modest income-producing project in a supervised program of work as outlined above
- Demonstrate capability of planning, managing and operating the project under guidance and assistance from a project advisor. The project supervisor must recommend the youth loan applicant, along with providing adequate supervision

Visit <http://offices.usda.gov> to find your local contact for help preparing and processing the application forms.

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## NRCS Announces EQIP Signup for 2017 Funding- Apply by Sept. 2, 2016

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) announced farmers interested in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) need to apply by September 2, 2016, for funding in 2017. Applications are being taken at all USDA Service Centers in Wisconsin.

EQIP is the primary program available to farmers for farm and woodland conservation work, offering payments for over 110 basic conservation practices. Last year, Wisconsin received about \$21 million in funds for EQIP practices.

All eligible applications received by Sept. 2, 2016, will be evaluated and ranked for funding in 2017. Farmers may contact their local USDA Service Center to get started on producer eligibility and planning. Farmers who are interested in practices that may require permits, such as manure storage or streambank restoration are reminded to begin planning and seeking permits as soon as possible. Applicants with shovel-ready projects (designs completed and permits obtained) will receive higher priority.

Special sign-up opportunities are also now open for On-Farm Energy, Organic, and Seasonal High Tunnel conservation practices, as well as a number of landscape based initiatives. All offer technical and financial assistance through EQIP.

(EQIP Continued)

**On-Farm Energy:** NRCS and producers develop Agricultural Energy Management Plans (AgEMP) or farm energy audits that assess energy consumption on an operation. Audit data is used to develop energy conservation recommendations.

**Organic:** NRCS helps certified organic growers and producers, working to achieve organic certification, install conservation practices to address resource concerns on organic operations.

**Seasonal High Tunnel (Hoop House):** NRCS helps producers plan and implement high tunnels - steel-framed, polyethylene-covered structures that extend growing seasons in an environmentally safe manner. High tunnel benefits include better plant and soil quality, fewer nutrients and pesticides in the environment, and better air quality due to fewer vehicles being needed to transport crops. Supporting conservation practices such as grassed waterways, and diversions are available to address resource concerns on operations with Seasonal High Tunnel structures.

**Honey Bee:** The upper Midwest is the resting ground for over 65 percent of commercially managed honey bees in the country. The NRCS is helping farmers and landowners implement conservation practices that will provide safe and diverse food sources for honey bees. Pasture management, wildlife habitat, and appropriate cover crops are used as tools to improve the health of our honey bees, which support more than \$15 billion worth of agricultural production.

**Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watershed Initiative:** Through this Initiative, NRCS and its partners will help producers in selected watersheds in the Mississippi River Basin voluntarily implement conservation practices that avoid, control, and trap nutrient runoff; improve wildlife habitat; and maintain agricultural productivity. Designated subwatersheds within the Kickapoo River and Rush River basins are eligible.

**National Water Quality Initiative:** NWQI is designed to help individual agricultural producers take actions to reduce the runoff of sediment, nutrients, and pathogens into waterways where water quality is a critical concern. The goal is to implement conservation practices in focused watersheds in a concentrated area so that agriculture no longer contributes to the impairment of water bodies within these priority watersheds. Eligible watersheds include Big Green Lake in Green Lake County, Spring Creek in Green County, Wilson Creek in Dunn and St. Croix County.

**Monarch Butterfly Habitat Development Project:** This project is an effort to boost monarch populations through the Southern Plains and Upper Midwest. Through EQIP, NRCS Wisconsin will assist the effort by working with partners and clients to increase monarch habitat on private lands. Southern and western Wisconsin are priority areas of the project.

**Great Lakes Restoration Initiative:** Through GLRI, NRCS offers financial assistance to agricultural producers for implementing practices that improve water quality in selected watersheds. Eligible watersheds in Wisconsin include the Lower Fox River, Manitowoc-Sheboygan, and the Milwaukee River.

**Regional Conservation Partnership Program:** The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCP) promotes coordination between NRCS and its partners to deliver conservation assistance to producers and landowners. NRCS provides assistance to producers through partnership agreements and through program contracts or easement agreements. Current active projects for water quality improvement are located within the Oconomowoc River watershed, the Baraboo River Watershed, and the Yahara River watershed as well as a project to improve Golden-winged warbler habitat in 20 northern Wisconsin counties.

Landowners interested in applying for EQIP funding should contact their local NRCS office at the USDA Service Center in their county. For more information, visit [www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov).

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## Organic Grain Toolbox Field Day- August 11- Evansville, WI

Managing risk in organic grain farming happens at every level. While it may seem to begin with the production systems that the farmer puts in place, experienced growers will tell you that successful organic systems begin with understanding the farmer, the farmer's resource base, and how the farmer will develop their organic system plan.

(Organic Field Day continued)

OGRAIN, the Organic Grain Resources and Information Network is hosting an **Organic Grain Toolbox Field day on Thursday, August 11, 2016 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 pm. in Evansville, Wisconsin.** This field day is for farmers new to organic grains and those who want to improve their current operations. To learn more about the event, please visit the registration website by [clicking here.](#)

This field day is hosted by OGRAIN, the Organic Grain Resources And Information Network at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The field day series is made possible by a grant from the USDA Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program. OGRAIN is a collaborative effort of the UW-Madison Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems, the Farm and Industry Short Course, the UW-Madison Organic and Sustainable Cropping Systems lab and the Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service (MOSES).

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in this event should contact Kim Iczkowski at 608-662-4422 extension 133 or Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339 by Monday, August 8, 2016.

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