

March 2018



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

# NEWSLETTER

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### Alaska State Farm Service Agency

800 W Evergreen, Ste 216  
Palmer, AK 99645  
[www.fsa.usda.gov/ak](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/ak)

#### State Executive Director

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#### Northern County Office

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#### County Executive

### Alaska FSA State Director News

The planting season has begun for many of our greenhouse operations. Flowers to decorate our homes and yards add a lot of value and satisfaction to our lives. The beauty that comes from the wide variety of available flowers is incredible. I have a neighbor that claims she has never met a flower she didn't like. For many years the US Post Office in Palmer has had hanging baskets that would make most homeowners wishful. Local greenhouse operators are planting flowers now for hanging baskets and flats to be sold in a couple months. You might be planting them at home also. Daylights savings time makes us all think that spring and summer is not far away.

Bedding plants are not far behind. Tomatoes are one of the longer season crops and with heated space, these plants can do very well. They can be grown in almost any warm place where there is light. Yields depend widely on variety and growing conditions. A quick google search tells me that yields can vary from 10 lbs. to 80 lbs. per plant. My personal experience of trying to grow tomatoes outside of a

**Director/Farm Loan  
Manager**

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**Southern County Office**

800 W Evergreen, Ste 216  
Palmer, AK 99645

**County Executive  
Director/Farm Loan  
Manager**

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Hours Monday-Friday  
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Committee Meetings:  
Northern Co TBA  
Southern Co April 17, 10:00  
am

Please contact your local FSA  
Office for questions specific to  
your operation or county.

greenhouse has not been successful.

If you are looking for financing for the coming year, it is time to meet with your local County Executive Director. We need some time to work on your loan to help you have money available when you need it.

The next article about working with your lender (FSA) is really critical to our helping you. I could not have said it better or agree more. We want to help you be more successful in your operation. Please help us help you by communicating with us sooner, not later.

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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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## CRP Participants Must Maintain Approved Cover on Acreages Enrolled in CRP and Farm Programs

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) participants are responsible for ensuring adequate, approved vegetative and practice cover is maintained to control erosion throughout the life of the contract after the practice has been established. Participants must also control undesirable vegetation, weeds (including noxious weeds), insects and rodents that may pose a threat to existing cover or adversely impact other landowners in the area.

All CRP maintenance activities, such as mowing, burning, disking and spraying, must be conducted outside the primary nesting or brood rearing season for wildlife, which for Alaska is May 15 through June 25. However, spot treatment of the acreage may be allowed during the primary nesting or brood rearing season if, left untreated, the weeds, insects or undesirable species would adversely impact the approved cover. In this instance, spot treatment is limited to the affected areas in the field and requires County Committee approval prior to beginning the spot treatment. The County Committee will consult with NRCS to determine if such activities are needed to maintain the approved cover.

Annual mowing of CRP for generic weed control, or for cosmetic purposes, is prohibited at all times.

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## Breaking New Ground

Agricultural producers are reminded to consult with FSA and NRCS before breaking out new ground for production purposes as doing so without prior authorization may put a producer's federal farm program benefits in jeopardy. This is especially true for land that must meet Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions.

Producers with HEL determined soils are required to apply tillage, crop residue and rotational requirements as specified in their conservation plan.

Producers should notify FSA as a first point of contact prior to conducting land clearing or drainage type projects to ensure the proposed actions meet compliance criteria such as clearing any trees to create new cropland, then these areas will need to be reviewed to ensure such work will not risk your eligibility for benefits.

Landowners and operators complete the form AD-1026 - Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELC) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification to identify the proposed action and allow FSA to determine whether a referral to Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for further review is necessary.

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## USDA Enrollment Period for Safety Net Coverage in 2018

Farmers and ranchers with base acres in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) safety net program may enroll for the 2018 crop year. The enrollment period will end on Aug. 1, 2018.

**Since shares and ownership of a farm can change year-to-year, producers must enroll by signing a contract each program year.**

The producers on a farm that are not enrolled for the 2018 enrollment period will not be eligible for financial assistance from the ARC or PLC programs for the 2018 crop should crop prices or farm revenues fall below the historical price or revenue benchmarks established by the program. Producers who made their elections in previous years must still enroll during the 2018 enrollment period.

The ARC and PLC 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 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 and sweet rice), safflower seed, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat. Upland cotton is no longer a covered commodity. 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 visit their local FSA office. To find a local FSA office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

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## USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) Online Hay and Grazing Acres Locator Tool

FSA's **Hay Net** website [www.fsa.usda.gov/haynet](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/haynet) is the "go to" online resource for agricultural producers to list information concerning the need for hay and grazing acres or the availability of hay and grazing acres.

If, due to extenuating circumstances, producers are in need of hay and/or grazing acres to support livestock, please use **Hay Net** to post an advertisement seeking these resources. Likewise, landowners who have hay and/or grazing acres available for livestock producers should post a Hay Net advertisement as well.

A few things to remember when using the **Hay Net** website:

- There is a one-time registration process that should be completed by all users who want to post an ad online.
- Users who just want to browse ads DO NOT NEED to have an eAuthentication user id.
- Hay and grazing acre ads will be automatically removed after a period of 13 months.
- Please help your fellow farmer and rancher by keeping ads current and up to date and remove ads you no longer need or want advertised on **Hay Net**. Please, no corporate advertisements on this site.

**Hay Net** is brought to you by FSA as a public service. The sole purpose of this online resource is to provide a site for the exchange of information. FSA does not endorse, guarantee, or otherwise make representations of any kind regarding any user of this site and FSA is not responsible for defining the terms of grazing agreements or lease contracts.

For more information about **Hay Net** and other FSA services and programs, please contact your local FSA office. For local FSA Service Center contact information, please visit: [offices.usda.gov](http://offices.usda.gov).

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## Supervised Credit

Farm Service Agency (FSA) Farm Loan programs are considered supervised credit. Unlike loans from a commercial lender, FSA loans are intended to be temporary in nature. Therefore, it is our goal to help you graduate to commercial credit, and our farm loan staff is available to help borrowers through training and credit counseling.

The FSA team will help borrowers identify their goals to ensure financial success. Through this process, FSA staff will advise borrowers in developing strategies and a plan to meet your operation's goals and graduate to commercial credit. Ultimately, the borrower is responsible for the success of the farming operation, but FSA's staff will help in an advisory role to provide the tools necessary to help you achieve your operational goals and manage your finances.

For more information on FSA farm loan programs, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

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## USDA Farm Service Agency Offers Text Alerts to Alaska County Producers

Subscribers Can Receive Important Program Reminders and Updates

Alaska State USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) State Executive Director Bryan Scoresby reminds farmers and

ranchers in Alaska that they can receive notifications from their county office through text messages on their cell phone.

Whether producers are in the field, on a tractor or even on horseback, this service enables FSA customers and stakeholders to receive notifications while on the go. Producers will receive text messages regarding important program deadlines, reporting requirements, outreach events and updates.

Producers can text AKDeltaJunction or AKPalmer to FSANOW (372-669) to subscribe to text message alerts from the Northern and Southern County Offices. Standard text messaging rates apply. Contact your wireless carrier for details associated with your particular data plan. Participants may unsubscribe at any time.

Please contact Lloyd Wilhelm, Northern County Executive Director, at (907) 895-4242, [lloyd.wilhelm@ak.usda.gov](mailto:lloyd.wilhelm@ak.usda.gov) or Erin Sturdivant, Southern County Executive Director, at (907) 761-7754 [erin.sturdivant@ak.usda.gov](mailto:erin.sturdivant@ak.usda.gov) if you have questions regarding FSA's email news service or text message option.

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Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in these meetings and/or events should contact Lloyd Wilhelm, Northern CED, at (907) 895-4242, Erin Sturdivant, Southern CED, at (907) 761-7754 or Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339.

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