

## USDA resumes farm payments

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

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The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency administrator Juan M. Garcia recently announced that farm payments, which had been temporarily suspended, were scheduled to resume Wednesday, May 8.

This includes payments for the 2011 Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program, the Noninsured Crop Assistance Program and the Milk Income Loss Contract Program.

"I'm pleased to announce that farmers and ranchers can expect to begin receiving their payments beginning Wednesday, May 8," said Garcia. "We appreciate the producers' patience during the delay. We're working diligently to get these payments out as quickly as possible."

On March 4, FSA began a temporary suspension of FSA program payments in order to assess the impact of sequestration and determine the least-disruptive process possible for carrying out required cuts.

On March 19, USDA notified Congress of its intention to capture the required sequester savings by reducing payments made through the direct payment program. The exact percentage of the reduction to direct payments will be determined close to the end of the fiscal year (October 2013), based on program sign ups and outlays.

Producers should be advised that program sign-up periods currently under way have the following enrollment deadlines: 2013 Average Crop Revenue Election Program—June 3; 2011 SURE—June 7; and the 2013 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program—Aug. 2. Producers should contact local Farm Service Agency office as soon as possible for appointments to enroll in these programs before the deadlines.

USDA has made a concerted effort to deliver results for the American people, even as USDA implements sequestration—the across-the-board budget reductions mandated under terms of the Budget Control Act.

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USDA has already undertaken historic efforts since 2009 to save more than \$828 million in taxpayer funds through targeted, common-sense budget reductions. These reductions have put USDA in a better position to carry out its mission, while implementing sequester budget reductions in a fair manner that causes as little disruption as possible.

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