

Farm loan delinquencies highest in 9 years

WICHITA, Kan. (AP) - The nation's farmers are struggling to pay back their loans after years of low crop prices, with nearly one out of five loans in a government farm program now delinquent for the worst January default rate in at least nine years.

The bulk of the nation's agricultural loans typically come due around Jan. 1 for seasonal and tax planning purposes.

Figures recently compiled show an overall jump nationwide in delinquencies for producers with direct loans from the Agriculture Department's Farm Service Agency.

David Schemm, executive director of the Kansas Farm Service Agency, says 19.4 percent of FSA direct loans nationwide were delinquent in January, compared to 16.5 percent the same month a year ago.

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