Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) Invoices and Documentation

Applicants must provide satisfactory evidence to determine whether ECP practice requirements were satisfied, which may include necessary invoices, cancelled checks, paid receipts, analysis tags or other similar evidence to document the costs incurred. If the applicant performs the practice with their own labor, equipment or materials, the applicant shall submit signed, itemized statements. Statements shall include the following:

- Dates of work performed
- Cost per hour charged for labor
- Type of equipment used
- Charge for equipment
- Type and cost of materials used
- Any other applicable information.

Cabbage Growers Need to Make Insurance Decisions Soon

Florida FSA Newsletter

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Mike Adams
Jimmy LeFils
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State Executive Director:
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Division Chiefs:
Fresh Market Sweet Corn, Fresh Market Tomato, and Pepper Growers Need to Make Insurance Decisions Soon

USDA’s Risk Management Agency (RMA) reminds Florida fresh market sweet corn, fresh market tomato, and pepper growers that the final date to apply for crop insurance coverage is July 31. Current policyholders who wish to make changes to their existing coverage also have until the July 31 sales closing date to do so.

Federal crop insurance is critical to the farm safety net. It helps producers and owners manage revenue risks and strengthens the rural economy.

Coverage is available for fresh market sweet corn in Broward, De Soto, Glades, Hendry, Indian River, Lake, Martin, Miami-Dade, Orange, Palm Beach, and Suwannee counties.

Coverage is also available for fresh market tomatoes in Broward, Charlotte, Collier, De Soto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Hillsborough, Lee, Manatee, Martin, Miami-Dade, Palm Beach, Polk, Sarasota, and St. Lucie counties.

Coverage is available for peppers in Broward, Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Hillsborough, Lee, Manatee, Martin, Palm Beach, Sarasota, and St. Lucie counties.

Growers are encouraged to visit their crop insurance agent soon to learn specific details for the 2020 crop year. A list of crop insurance agents is available at all USDA Service Centers and online at the RMA Agent Locator. Growers can use the RMA Cost Estimator to get a premium amount estimate of their insurance needs online.

For more information about crop insurance, visit https://rma.usda.gov.

Eligibility for Nominations for the 2019 County Committee Elections
The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees are a critical component of the day-to-day operations of FSA and allow grassroots input and local administration of federal farm programs.

Committees are comprised of locally elected agricultural producers responsible for the fair and equitable administration of FSA farm programs in their counties. Committee members are accountable to the Secretary of Agriculture. If elected, members become part of a local decision making and farm program delivery process.

A county committee is composed of three to 11 elected members from local administrative areas (LAA). Each member serves a three-year term. To be eligible for nomination and hold office as a committee member or alternate, a person must fulfill each of the following requirements: (1) be a producer with an interest in farming or ranching operations, (2) participate or cooperate in any FSA program provided for by law, (3) be a U.S. citizen, (4) be of legal voting age, (5) meet the basic eligibility requirements, and (6) reside in the county or multi-county jurisdiction in which they will be serving.

All nomination forms for the 2019 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA service center by Aug. 1, 2019. For more information on FSA county committee elections and appointments, refer to the FSA fact sheet: Eligibility to Vote and Hold Office as a COC Member available online at: fsa.usda.gov/elections.

**Every Season is #scamseason**

Remember to discuss your USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) account information only with people you recognize and trust.

If you have questions about your FSA accounts, contact your local FSA office. To locate your local FSA office, visit [http://offices.usda.gov](http://offices.usda.gov).

**USDA Offers Producers Options to Re-enroll or Extend Expiring CRP Contracts**

Farmers and ranchers with expiring Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contracts may now re-enroll in certain CRP continuous signup practices or, if eligible, select a one-year contract extension. USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) is also accepting offers from landowners who want to enroll for the first time in one of the country’s largest conservation programs. FSA’s 52nd signup for CRP runs from June 3 to August 23.

This year’s CRP continuous signup includes practices such as grass waterways, filter strips, riparian buffers, wetland restoration and others. View a full list of practices approved for this signup. Continuous signup contracts last for 10 to 15 years. Soil rental rates are set at 90 percent of 2018 rates. Incentive payments are not offered for these practices.

Producers interested in applying for CRP continuous practices, including those under existing CREP agreements, or who want to extend their contract, should contact their USDA service center by August 23.


**New Dairy Margin Coverage Signup Began June 17**
Signup began June 17 for the new Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) program, the cornerstone program of the dairy safety net that helps dairy producers manage the volatility of milk and feed prices, operated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Farm Service Agency (FSA).

The 2018 Farm Bill allowed USDA to construct the new DMC, which replaces the Margin Protection Program for Dairy (MPP-Dairy). This new program offers protection to dairy producers when the difference between the all-milk price and the average feed cost (the margin) falls below a certain dollar amount selected by the producer.

The program provides coverage retroactive to January 1, 2019, with applicable payments following soon after enrollment. At the time of signup, dairy producers can choose between the $4.00 to $9.50 coverage levels. Learn more about coverage levels and premiums.

The Farm Bill also allows producers who participated in MPP-Dairy from 2014-2017 to receive a repayment or credit for part of the premiums paid into the program. FSA has been providing premium reimbursements to producers since last month and those that elect the 75 percent credit option will now have that credit applied toward 2019 DMC premiums.

The Department has built in a 50 percent blend of premium and supreme alfalfa hay prices with the alfalfa hay price used under the prior dairy program to provide a total feed cost that more closely aligns with hay rations used by many producers. At a milk margin minus feed cost of $9.50 or less, payments are possible. With the 50 percent hay blend, FSA’s revised April 2019 income over feed cost margin is $8.82 per hundredweight (cwt). The revised margins for January, February and March are, respectively, $7.71, $7.91 and $8.66 – triggering DMC payments for each month.

DMC payments will be reduced by 6.2 percent in 2019 because of a sequester order required by Congress and issued in accordance with the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

DMC offers catastrophic coverage at no cost to the producer, other than an annual $100 administrative fee. Producers can opt for greater coverage levels for a premium in addition to the administrative fee. Operations owned by limited resource, beginning, socially disadvantaged or veteran farmers and ranchers may be eligible for a waiver on administrative fees. Producers have the choice to lock in coverage levels until 2023 and receive a 25-percent discount on their DMC premiums.

To assist producers in making coverage elections, USDA partnered with the University of Wisconsin to develop a DMC decision support tool, which can be used to evaluate various scenarios using different coverage levels through DMC.

All dairy operations in the United States are eligible for the DMC program. An operation can be run either by a single producer or multiple producers who commercially produce and market cows’ milk.

Eligible dairy operations must have a production history determined by FSA. For most operations, production history is based on the highest milk production in 2011, 2012 and 2013. Newer dairy operations have other options for determining production history. Producers have the choice to lock in coverage levels until 2023 and receive a 25-percent discount on their DMC premiums.

For more information, visit farmers.gov DMC webpage or contact your local USDA service center. To locate your local FSA office, visit farmers.gov/service-locator.
USDA and SCORE Joining Forces to Find Mentors

If you are a farmer or rancher, or have agricultural or business experience, join us in supporting the next generation and in investing in your local community! Your experiences and knowledge as a business owner, agricultural professional, or farmer can provide vital support to the community you live in.

USDA is collaborating with SCORE – www.score.org - the nation's largest network of volunteer, expert business mentors in an effort to expand the field of available agricultural mentors and provide free business mentoring to farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural and rural business owners. SCORE is currently looking for volunteers with experience in an agriculture-related field who would like to become a part of an extended field of volunteers. The organization's Orientation and Mentoring Certification program provides volunteers with everything needed to be a successful volunteer. Training includes background about SCORE’s mission and services, as well as guidance on how to be a business mentor, including enhancement of listening, interviewing and problem-solving skills.

Current SCORE volunteer mentors have backgrounds in finance, accounting, marketing, operations, business and financial planning. The mentors provide local expertise and free one-on-one business mentoring to new and existing farmers and business owners. Together they work through the process of starting up or maintaining agricultural and rural businesses. No matter what stage a business is in, SCORE volunteer mentors can help in developing business plans, navigating financing and legal issues, identifying new markets, and other topics, in order to help their clients succeed. FSA invites you to learn more and sign up to become a mentor today at https://newfarmers.usda.gov/mentorship.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. 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).