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Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

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Georgia State FSA Newsletter

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USDA Opens Sign-up for Market Facilitation Program

Enrollment Open through Dec. 6

Sign-up is ongoing for the Market Facilitation Program (MFP), a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) program to assist farmers who continue to suffer from damages because of unjustified trade retaliation from foreign nations. Through MFP, USDA will provide up to \$14.5 billion in direct payments to impacted producers, part of a broader trade relief package announced in late July. The sign-up period runs through Dec. 6, 2019.

MFP payments will be made to producers of certain non-specialty and specialty crops as well as dairy and hog producers.

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your local office go to
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Non-Specialty Crops

MFP payments will be made to producers of alfalfa hay, barley, canola, corn, crambe, dried beans, dry peas, extra-long staple cotton, flaxseed, lentils, long grain and medium grain rice, millet, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, rapeseed, rye, safflower, sesame seed, small and large chickpeas, sorghum, soybeans, sunflower seed, temperate japonica rice, triticale, upland cotton, and wheat.

MFP assistance for 2019 crops is based on a single county payment rate multiplied by a farm's total plantings to the MFP-eligible crops in aggregate in 2019. Those per acre payments are not dependent on which of those crops are planted in 2019. A producer's total payment-eligible plantings cannot exceed total 2018 plantings. [View payment rates by county.](#)

Dairy and Hogs

Dairy producers who were in business as of June 1, 2019, will receive a per hundredweight payment on production history, and hog producers will receive a payment based on the number of live hogs owned on a day selected by the producer between April 1 and May 15, 2019.

Specialty Crops

MFP payments will also be made to producers of almonds, cranberries, cultivated ginseng, fresh grapes, fresh sweet cherries, hazelnuts, macadamia nuts, pecans, pistachios, and walnuts. Each specialty crop will receive a payment based on 2019 acres of fruit or nut bearing plants, or in the case of ginseng, based on harvested acres in 2019.

More Information

Payments will be made in up to three installments, with the second and third installments evaluated as market conditions and trade opportunities dictate. If conditions warrant, the second and third installments will be made in November and early January.

MFP payments are limited to a combined \$250,000 for non-specialty crops per person or legal entity. MFP payments are also limited to a combined \$250,000 for dairy and hog producers and a combined \$250,000 for specialty crop producers. However, no applicant can receive more than \$500,000. Eligible applicants must also have an average adjusted gross income (AGI) for tax years 2015, 2016, and 2017 of less than \$900,000, or 75 percent of the person's or legal entity's average AGI for those tax years must have been derived from farming and ranching. Applicants must also comply with the provisions of the Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation regulations.

More information can be found on farmers.gov/mfp, including payment information and a program application.

USDA Opens 2020 Enrollment for Dairy Margin Coverage Program; Ends Dec. 13, 2019

Dairy producers can now enroll in the [Dairy Margin Coverage \(DMC\)](#) for calendar year 2020. USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) opened sign-up for the program that helps producers manage economic risk brought on by milk price and feed cost disparities.

The DMC program offers reasonably priced 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 deadline to enroll in DMC for 2020 is Dec. 13, 2019.

Dairy farmers earned more than \$300 million dollars from the program in 2019 so far. Producers are encouraged to take advantage of this very important risk management tool for 2020.

All producers who want 2020 coverage, even those who took advantage of the 25 percent premium discount by locking in the coverage level for five years of margin protection coverage are required to visit the office during this sign-up period to pay the annual administrative fee.

Dairy producers should definitely consider coverage for 2020, as even the slightest drop in the margin can trigger payments.

More Information

The 2018 Farm Bill created DMC, improving on the previous safety net for dairy producers. DMC is one of many programs that FSA and other USDA agencies are implementing to support America's farmers.

For more information on enrolling in DMC and taking advantage of an online dairy decision tool that assists producers in selecting coverage for 2020, visit the [DMC webpage](#).

For additional questions and assistance, contact your local USDA Service Center. To locate your local FSA office, visit farmers.gov/service-locator.

USDA Safety Net Program Enrollment Opens for 2020

Agricultural producers can now enroll in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs – two U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) safety net programs – for the 2020 crop year. Meanwhile, producers who enrolled farms for the 2018 crop year have started receiving more than \$1.5 billion for covered commodities for which payments were triggered under such programs.

ARC provides income support payments on historical base acres when actual crop revenue declines below a specified guaranteed level. PLC provides income support payments on historical

base acres when the effective price for a covered commodity falls below its reference price. The 2018 Farm Bill reauthorized and updated both programs.

Sign-up for the 2020 crop year closes June 30, 2020, while sign-up for the 2019 crop year closes March 15, 2020. Producers who have not yet enrolled for 2019 can enroll for both 2019 and 2020 during the same visit to an FSA County Office.

ARC and PLC have options for the farm operator who is actively farming the land as well as the owner of the land. Farm owners also have a one-time opportunity to update PLC payment yields beginning with crop year 2020. If the farm owner and producer visit the FSA County Office together, FSA can also update yield information during that visit.

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 and short grain rice, safflower seed, seed cotton, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed, and wheat.

2018 Crop Year ARC and PLC Payments

FSA began processing payments last week for 2018 ARC-County (ARC-CO) and PLC on covered commodities that met payment triggers on enrolled farms in the 2018 crop year. In addition to the \$1.5 billion now in process, FSA anticipates it will issue another \$1 billion in November, once USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service publishes additional commodity prices for the 2018 crop.

Producers who had 2018 covered commodities enrolled in ARC-CO can visit www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc for payment rates applicable to their county and each covered commodity. For farms and covered commodities enrolled in 2018 PLC, the following crops met payment triggers: barley, canola, corn, dry peas, grain sorghum, lentils, peanuts, and wheat.

Oats and soybeans did not meet 2018 PLC payment triggers.

2018 PLC payment rates for the following covered commodities have not been determined: crambe, flaxseed, large and small chickpeas, long and medium grain rice, mustard seed, rapeseed, safflower, seed cotton, sesame seed, sunflower seed, and temperate Japonica rice.

More Information

For more information on ARC and PLC including two online decision tools that assist producers in making enrollment and election decisions specific to their operations, visit the [ARC and PLC webpage](#).

Farm Service Agency Announces Disaster Relief Payments for Loss of On-Farm Stored Commodities in Georgia

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) in Georgia announced payments are now available to eligible producers who lost stored commodities due to natural disaster in 2018 and/or 2019. The On-Farm Storage Loss Program (OFSLP) was authorized by the Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act of 2019.

Administered by FSA, OFSLP provides payments to eligible producers who suffered uncompensated losses of harvested commodities including grains, oilseeds, and hay stored in on-farm structures. For producers to receive payment, the losses must be directly related to an eligible disaster event such as hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, typhoons, volcanic activity, snowstorms, and wildfires that occurred during 2018 and/or 2019.

To be eligible for OFSLP, the farm storage structure must be located on the farm, not used for commercial storage, and would have, under normal circumstances, maintained the quality of the commodity. Commodities stored in warehouses are not eligible for OFSLP. Program payments are made for the loss of the stored commodity and not for the loss of the structure itself.

Commodities eligible for OFSL include: barley, canola, chickpeas (large and small), corn, cotton, crambe, dry peas, flaxseed, grain sorghum, hay (alfalfa and all-hay), lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, rapeseed, rice, safflower seed, sesame seed, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat.

FSA uses a national payment rate per commodity which is based on market or harvest prices. Payments will be calculated using a 75 percent factored FSA payment rate multiplied by the quantity lost while stored.

OFSLP has a payment limitation of \$125,000 per entity. Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) does not apply to OFSLP and an acreage report is not required for this program.

For specific commodity payment rates, to submit an application, or for additional program information, contact your local USDA Service Center. To find your local USDA Service Center, visit farmers.gov/service-locator.

FSA Encourages Farmers and Ranchers to Vote in County Committee Elections

The 2019 Farm Service Agency County Committee Elections began on Nov. 4, when ballots were mailed to eligible voters. The deadline to return the ballots to local FSA offices, or to be postmarked, is Dec. 2, 2019.

County committee members are an important component of the operations of FSA and provide a link between the agricultural community and USDA. Farmers and ranchers elected to county committees help deliver FSA programs at the local level, applying their knowledge and judgment to make decisions on commodity price support programs; conservation programs; incentive indemnity and disaster programs for some commodities; emergency programs and eligibility. FSA committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws.

To be an eligible voter, farmers and ranchers must participate or cooperate in an FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age but supervises and conducts the farming operations of an entire farm, may also be eligible to vote.

Newly elected committee members will take office Jan. 1, 2020.

More information on county committees, such as the new 2019 fact sheet, can be found on the FSA website at fsa.usda.gov/elections or at a local USDA Service Center.

USDA Offers Disaster Assistance for Georgia Farmers Hurt by 2018, 2019 Disasters

Agricultural producers affected by natural disasters in 2018 and 2019 can apply through the Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program Plus (WHIP+). Sign-up for this U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) program began Sept. 11.

WHIP+ Eligibility

WHIP+ will be available for eligible producers who have suffered eligible losses of certain crops, trees, bushes or vines in counties with a Presidential Emergency Disaster Declaration or a Secretarial Disaster Designation (primary counties only). Disaster losses must have been a result of hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, typhoons, volcanic activity, snowstorms or wildfires that occurred in 2018 or 2019. Also, producers in counties that did not receive a disaster declaration or designation may still apply for WHIP+ but must provide supporting documentation to establish that the crops were directly affected by a qualifying disaster loss.

A list of counties that received qualifying disaster declarations and designations is available at farmers.gov/recover/whip-plus. Because grazing and livestock losses, other than milk losses, are covered by other disaster recovery programs offered through FSA, those losses are not eligible for WHIP+.

Eligible crops include those for which federal crop insurance or Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage is available, excluding crops intended for grazing. A list of crops covered by crop insurance is available through USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) Actuarial Information Browser at webapp.rma.usda.gov/apps/actuarialinformationbrowser.

The WHIP+ payment factor ranges from 75 percent to 95 percent, depending on the level of crop insurance coverage or NAP coverage that a producer obtained for the crop. Producers who did not insure their crops in 2018 or 2019 will receive 70 percent of the expected value of the crop. Insured crops (either crop insurance or NAP coverage) will receive between 75 percent and 95 percent of expected value; those who purchased the highest levels of coverage will receive 95 percent of the expected value.

At the time of sign-up, producers will be asked to provide verifiable and reliable production records. If a producer is unable to provide production records, WHIP+ payments will be determined based on the lower of either the actual loss certified by the producer and determined acceptable by FSA or the county expected yield and county disaster yield. The county disaster yield is the production that a producer would have been expected to make based on the eligible disaster conditions in the county.

WHIP+ payments for 2018 disasters will be eligible for 100 percent of their calculated value. WHIP+ payments for 2019 disasters will be limited to an initial 50 percent of their calculated value, with an opportunity to receive up to the remaining 50 percent after January 1, 2020, if sufficient funding remains.

Both insured and uninsured producers are eligible to apply for WHIP+. But all producers receiving WHIP+ payments will be required to purchase crop insurance or NAP, at the 60 percent coverage level or higher, for the next two available, consecutive crop years after the crop year for which WHIP+ payments were paid. Producers who fail to purchase crop insurance for the next two applicable, consecutive years will be required to pay back the WHIP+ payment.

Additional information about WHIP+ program eligibility and payment limitations can be found at farmers.gov/recover or by contacting your local [USDA Service Center](#).

Additional Loss Coverage

The Milk Loss Program will provide payments to eligible dairy operations for milk that was dumped or removed without compensation from the commercial milk market because of a qualifying 2018 and 2019 natural disaster. Producers who suffered losses of harvested commodities, including hay, stored in on-farm structures in 2018 and 2019 will receive assistance through the On-Farm Storage Loss Program.

Additionally, producers with trees, bushes or vines can receive both cost-share assistance through FSA's Tree Assistance Program (TAP) for the cost of replanting and rehabilitating eligible trees and WHIP+ will provide payments based on the loss value of the tree, bush or vine itself. Therefore, eligible producers may receive both a TAP and a 2017 WHIP or WHIP+ payment for the same acreage. In addition, TAP policy has been updated to assist eligible orchardists or nursery tree growers of pecan trees with a tree mortality rate that exceeds 7.5 percent (adjusted for normal mortality) but is less than 15 percent (adjusted for normal mortality) for losses incurred during 2018.

Additionally, the disaster relief measure expanded coverage of the 2017 WHIP to include peach and blueberry crop losses that resulted from extreme cold.

For more information on FSA disaster assistance programs, please contact your local [USDA service center](#) or visit farmers.gov/recover. For all available USDA disaster assistance programs, go to [USDA's disaster resources website](#).

2019 Livestock Forage Losses

Producers in the following Counties are eligible to apply for 2019 Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) benefits on native pasture, improved pasture.

Baldwin	Dawson	Johnson	Rabun
Banks	DeKalb	Lamar	Rockdale
Barrow	Douglas	Laurens	Screven
Bartow	Fayette	Lumpkin	Spalding
Burke	Forsyth	Meriwether	Stephens
Butts	Gilmer	Monroe	Taliaferro
Carroll	Greene	Morgan	Twiggs
Cherokee	Gwinnett	Newton	Upton
Clarke	Habersham	Oconee	Walker
Clayton	Hall	Oglethorpe	Walton
Cobb	Hancock	Paulding	Warren
Coweta	Henry	Pickens	Washington
Dade	Jasper	Pike	White
	Jenkins	Putnam	Wilkinson

LFP provides compensation to eligible livestock producers who suffer grazing losses for covered livestock due to drought on privately owned or cash leased land or fire on federally managed land.

County committees can only accept LFP applications after notification is received by the National Office of qualifying drought or if a federal agency prohibits producers from grazing normally

permitted livestock on federally managed lands due to qualifying fire. Eligible livestock producers must complete a CCC-853 and required supporting documentation no later than 30 days after the end of the calendar year in which the grazing loss occurred.

Additional information about LFP, including eligible livestock and fire criteria, is available at your local FSA office or online at: www.fsa.usda.gov.

Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP)

The Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) provides emergency assistance to eligible livestock, honeybee, and farm-raised fish producers who have losses due to disease, adverse weather or other conditions, such as blizzards and wildfires, not covered by other agricultural disaster assistance programs.

Eligible livestock losses include grazing losses not covered under the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP), loss of purchased feed and/or mechanically harvested feed due to an eligible adverse weather event, additional cost of transporting water because of an eligible drought and additional cost associated with gathering livestock to treat for cattle tick fever.

Eligible honeybee losses include loss of purchased feed due to an eligible adverse weather event, cost of additional feed purchased above normal quantities due to an eligible adverse weather condition, colony losses in excess of normal mortality due to an eligible weather event or loss condition, including CCD, and hive losses due to eligible adverse weather.

Eligible farm-raised fish losses include death losses in excess of normal mortality and/or loss of purchased feed due to an eligible adverse weather event.

Producers who suffer eligible livestock, honeybee, or farm-raised fish losses from Oct. 1, 2018 to Dec. 31, 2019 must file:

- A notice of loss within 30 calendar days after the loss is apparent.
- An application for payment by Jan. 30, 2020

The following ELAP Fact Sheets (by topic) are available online:

- [ELAP for Farm-Raised Fish Fact Sheet](#)
- [ELAP for Livestock Fact Sheet](#)
- [ELAP for Honeybees Fact Sheet](#)

To view these and other FSA program fact sheets, visit the FSA fact sheet web page at www.fsa.usda.gov/factsheets.

USDA Designates 24 Georgia Counties as Primary Natural Disaster Areas

Emergency support to Producers in Surrounding Counties/Border States Also Available

Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue designated 24 Georgia counties as primary natural disaster areas. Producers who suffered losses due to recent drought may be eligible for U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) [emergency loans](#).

The Georgia counties with the primary natural disaster designation include Banks, Bartow, Carroll, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, Dawson, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Forsyth, Fulton, Gilmer, Gwinnett, Habersham, Hall, Henry, Lumpkin, Paulding, Pickens, Twiggs, White, and Wilkinson.

This natural disaster designation allows FSA to extend much-needed emergency credit to producers recovering from natural disasters. Emergency loans can be used to meet various recovery needs including the replacement of essential items such as equipment or livestock, reorganization of a farming operation or the refinance of certain debts.

Producers in the contiguous Georgia counties of Baldwin, Barrow, Bibb, Bleckley, Butts, Fannin, Floyd, Franklin, Gordon, Haralson, Heard, Houston, Jackson, Johnson, Jones, Laurens, Madison, Meriwether, Murray, Newton, Polk, Rabun, Rockdale, Spalding, Stephens, Towns, Troup, Union, Walton, and Washington, along with Cleburne and Randolph counties in Alabama, and Oconee County, South Carolina, are also eligible to apply for emergency loans.

The deadline to apply for these emergency loans is June 24, 2020.

FSA will review the loans based on the extent of losses, security available and repayment ability.

FSA has a variety of additional programs to help farmers recover from the impacts of this disaster. FSA programs that do not require a disaster declaration include: [Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program](#); [Emergency Conservation Program](#); [Livestock Forage Disaster Program](#); [Livestock Indemnity Program](#); [Operating and Farm Ownership Loans](#); and the [Tree Assistance Program](#).

Farmers may contact their local USDA Service Center for further information on eligibility requirements and application procedures for these and other programs. Additional information is also available online at farmers.gov/recover.

USDA Designates 13 Additional Georgia Counties as Primary Natural Disaster Areas

Emergency Support to Producers in Surrounding Counties/Border States Also Available

Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue designated 13 additional Georgia counties as primary natural disaster areas. Producers in Barrow, Clarke, Dade, Greene, Hancock, Morgan, Oconee, Oglethorpe, Putnam, Taliaferro, Walker, Walton, and Warren, who suffered losses due to recent drought may be eligible for U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) [emergency loans](#).

This natural disaster designation allows FSA to extend much-needed emergency credit to producers recovering from natural disasters. Emergency loans can be used to meet various recovery needs including the replacement of essential items such as equipment or livestock, reorganization of a farming operation or the refinance of certain debts.

Producers in the contiguous Georgia counties of Baldwin, Catoosa, Chattooga, Elbert, Floyd, Glascock, Gordon, Gwinnett, Hall, Jackson, Jasper, Jefferson, Jones, McDuffie, Madison, Newton, Rockdale, Washington, Whitfield, and Wilkes, along with DeKalb and Jackson counties in Alabama, and Hamilton and Marion counties in Tennessee, are also eligible to apply for emergency loans.

The deadline to apply for these emergency loans is July 6, 2020.

FSA will review the loans based on the extent of losses, security available and repayment ability.

The Secretary previously declared several other Georgia counties as primary natural disaster areas. A listing of all disaster designations can be found at fsa.usda.gov.

FSA has a variety of additional programs to help farmers recover from the impacts of this disaster. FSA programs that do not require a disaster declaration include: [Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program](#); [Emergency Conservation Program](#); [Livestock Forage Disaster Program](#); [Livestock Indemnity Program](#); [Operating and Farm Ownership Loans](#); and the [Tree Assistance Program](#).

Farmers may contact their local USDA Service Center for further information on eligibility requirements and application procedures for these and other programs. Additional information is also available online at farmers.gov/recover.

2020 Acreage Reporting Dates

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers are encouraged to visit their County FSA office to file an accurate crop certification report by the applicable deadline.

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable for 2020:

November 15, 2019	Onions (planted 9/20-10/20)
January 2, 2020	Honey
January 15, 2020	Apples, Blueberries, Canola, Peaches, Rye, Rapeseed, Fall-Seeded Small Grains
February 15, 2020	Onions (planted 10/21-2/1), Pecans
March 15, 2020	Cabbage (planted 10/1-2/20)
May 15, 2020	Sweet Corn (planted 8/26-5/15), Tobacco, Tomatoes (planted 8/16-4/5)
July 15, 2020	All other crops, Perennial Forage
August 15, 2020	Tomatoes (planted 7/1-8/15)
September 15, 2020	Sweet Corn (planted 7/15-8/25)

October 15, 2020

Cabbage (planted 7/16-9/30)

The following exceptions apply to the above acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.
- If a producer acquires additional acreage after the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the County Office.
- If a perennial forage crop is reported with the intended use of “cover only,” “green manure,” “left standing,” or “seed,” then the acreage must be reported by July 15th.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policyholders should note that the acreage reporting date for NAP covered crops is the earlier of the dates listed above or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins.

NOTE Spring and Fall Fruits and Vegetables for NAP eligibility is **15 days after completion of planting** for each specific crop.

For questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, please contact your FSA County Office.

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