



In This Issue:

- [Enrollment Period Begins for USDA's Reimbursement Transportation Cost Payment Program](#)
- [Farm Service Agency Now Accepting Nominations for County Committee Members](#)
- [Disaster Assistance for 2021 Livestock Forage Losses](#)
- [USDA to Provide Pandemic Assistance to Livestock Producers for Animal Losses](#)
- [Federal Relief Resources for Renters and Landlords](#)
- [Is the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program Right for You?](#)

Enrollment Period Begins for USDA's Reimbursement Transportation Cost Payment Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Hawaii State and the Pacific Basin opened enrollment this week for the Reimbursement Transportation Cost Payment Program (RTCP) for fiscal year 2021. The enrollment period began July 12 and will run through Sept. 3. Click here to see the full press release https://www.fsa.usda.gov/state-offices/Hawaii/news-releases/2021/stnr_hi_20210712_rel_09



Farm Service Agency Now Accepting Nominations for County Committee Members



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) began accepting nominations for county committee members on June 15. Elections will occur in certain Local Administrative Areas (LAA) for these members who make important decisions about how federal farm programs are administered locally. All nomination forms for the 2021 election must be postmarked or received in the local FSA office by Aug. 2, 2021.

Agricultural producers who participate or cooperate in a USDA program, and reside in the LAA that is up for election this year, may be nominated for candidacy for the county committee. A cooperating producer is someone who has provided information about their farming or ranching operation to FSA, even if they have not applied or received program benefits. Individuals may nominate themselves or others and qualifying organizations may also nominate candidates. USDA encourages minority producers, women and beginning farmers or ranchers to nominate, vote, and hold office.

Nationwide, more than 7,700 dedicated members of the agricultural community serving on FSA county committees. The committees are made up of three to 11 members who serve three-year terms. Producers

serving on FSA county committees play a critical role in the day-to-day operations of the agency. Committee members are vital to how FSA carries out disaster programs, as well as conservation, commodity and price support programs, county office employment and other agricultural issues.

LAAs are elective areas for FSA committees in a single county or multi-county jurisdiction. This may include LAAs that are focused on an urban or suburban area.

More Information

Producers should contact their local FSA office today to register and find out how to get involved in their county's election. They should check with their local USDA Service Center to see if their LAA is up for election this year. To be considered, a producer must be registered and sign an [FSA-669A](#) nomination form or an [FSA-669-A-3](#) for urban county committees. The form and other information about FSA county committee elections are available at fsa.usda.gov/elections.

Election ballots will be mailed to eligible voters beginning Nov. 1, 2021. To find your local USDA Service Center, visit farmers.gov/service-locator.

Disaster Assistance for 2021 Livestock Forage Losses

Producers in Hawaii and Maui Counties are eligible to apply for 2021 Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) benefits on native pasture and improved pasture.

LFP provides compensation if you 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 normal permitted livestock on federally managed lands due to qualifying fire. You must complete a CCC-853 and the required supporting documentation no later than January 30, 2022, for 2021 losses.

For additional information about LFP, including eligible livestock and fire criteria, contact your [County USDA Service Center](#) or visit fsa.usda.gov.

USDA Microloans Help Farmers Purchase Farmland and Improve Property

Farmers can use USDA farm ownership microloans to buy and improve property. These microloans are especially helpful to beginning or underserved farmers, U.S. veterans looking for a career in farming, and those who have small and mid-sized farming operations.

Microloans have helped farmers and ranchers with operating costs, such as feed, fertilizer, tools, fencing, equipment, and living expenses since 2013.

Microloans can also help with farmland and building purchases and soil and water conservation improvements. FSA designed the expanded program to simplify the application process, expand eligibility requirements and expedite smaller real estate loans to help farmers strengthen their operations. Microloans provide up to \$50,000 to qualified producers and can be issued to the applicant directly from the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA).

To learn more about the FSA microloan program, contact your local [USDA Service Center](#) at or visit fsa.usda.gov/microloans.

USDA to Provide Pandemic Assistance to Livestock Producers for Animal Losses



Livestock and poultry producers who suffered losses during the pandemic due to insufficient access to processing can apply for assistance for those losses and the cost of depopulation and disposal of the animals. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Vilsack announced the Pandemic Livestock Indemnity Program (PLIP) in [recorded] remarks at the National Pork Industry Conference in Wisconsin Dells, WI. The announcement is part of USDA's Pandemic Assistance for Producers initiative. Livestock and poultry producers can apply for assistance through USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) July 20 through Sept. 17, 2021.

Click here for the full press release: https://www.fsa.usda.gov/state-offices/Hawaii/news-releases/2021/stnr_hi_20210720_rel_14

Federal Relief Resources for Renters and Landlords

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently [announced](#) a one-month extension of the CDC Eviction Moratorium expiring on July 31, 2021. USDA recognizes the COVID-19 pandemic has triggered an almost unprecedented housing affordability crisis in the United States. The American Rescue Plan (ARP) provided billions of dollars to support distressed tenants and landlords and USDA continues to collaborate with federal partners to ensure Rural America receives ample relief. Provided below is information on several federal resources designed to help those facing rental hardship or eviction.

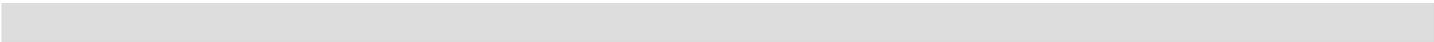
U.S. Treasury

Even as the American economy continues its recovery from the devastating impact of the pandemic, millions of Americans face deep rental debt and fear evictions and the loss of basic housing security. To meet this need, the U.S. Treasury's [Emergency Rental Assistance \(ERA\) program](#) makes funding available to assist households that are unable to pay rent or utilities. The funds are provided directly to grantees such as states, U.S. territories, local governments, and (in the case of the first round of funding) Indian tribes. Grantees use the funds to provide assistance to eligible households through existing or newly created rental assistance programs. To learn more about how to apply for emergency rental assistance in your state, please visit this [link](#). Information in Spanish for renters can be found [here](#), and information in Spanish for landlords can be found [here](#).

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

The Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) program will provide 70,000 housing choice vouchers to local Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) in order to assist individuals who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, fleeing domestic violence, or were recently homeless or have a high risk of housing instability. For more information on eligibility and how to apply, please visit this [link](#). HUD and USDA have also partnered on developing a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) fact sheet, which can be found [here](#). Information in Spanish can be found [here](#).

Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB)



CFPB provides additional resources to inform renters of potential options to help them stay in their homes. Please visit [CFPB's Renter Protections resource webpage](#) for more information. Information in Spanish can be found [here](#).

Is the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program Right for You?

Farmers and ranchers rely on crop insurance to protect themselves from disasters and unforeseen events, but not all crops are insurable through the USDA's Risk Management Agency. The Farm Service Agency's (FSA) Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) provides producers another option to obtain coverage against disaster for these crops. NAP provides financial assistance to producers of non-insured crops impacted by natural disasters that result in lower yields, crop losses, or prevents crop planting.

Commercially produced crops and agricultural commodities for which crop insurance is not available are generally eligible for NAP. Eligible crops include those grown specifically for food, fiber, livestock consumption, biofuel or biobased products, or be commodities such as value loss crops like Christmas trees and ornamental nursery, honey, maple sap, and many others. Contact your FSA office to see which crops are eligible in your state and county.

Eligible causes of loss include drought, freeze, hail, excessive moisture, excessive wind or hurricanes, earthquake, flood. These events must occur during the NAP policy coverage period, before or during harvest, and the disaster must directly affect the eligible crop. For guidance on causes of loss not listed, contact your local FSA county office.

Interested producers must apply for coverage using FSA form [CCC-471](#), "Application for Coverage," and pay the applicable service fee at the FSA office where their farm records are maintained. These must be filed by the application closing date. Closing dates vary by crop, so it is important to contact your local FSA office as soon as possible to ensure you don't miss an application closing date.

At the time of application, each producer will be provided a copy of the [NAP Basic Provisions](#), which describes how NAP works and all the requirements you must follow to maintain NAP coverage. NAP participants must provide accurate annual reports of their production in non-loss years to ensure their NAP coverage is beneficial to their individual operation.

Producers are required to pay service fees which vary depending on the number of crops and number of counties your operation is located in. The NAP service fee is the lesser of \$325 per crop or \$825 per producer per administrative county, not to exceed a total of \$1,950 for a producer with farming interests in multiple counties. Premiums also apply when producers elect higher levels of coverage with a maximum premium of \$15,750 per person or legal entity depending on the maximum payment limitation that may apply to the NAP covered producer. The service fee can be waived for beginning, qualifying veteran, and limited resource farmers and rancher., These farmers and ranchers can also receive a 50 percent reduction in the premium.

For more detailed information on NAP, download the [NAP Fact Sheet](#). To get started with NAP, we recommend you contact your [local USDA service center](#).



USDA website: <https://www.usda.gov/>
Farmer.gov website: <https://www.farmers.gov/>

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