USDA Opens Enrollment for Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage Programs

Agricultural producers can now enroll in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs, two popular safety net programs, for the 2019 crop year. Stakeholders must sign up for either program by March 15, 2020.

Although enrollment began Sept. 3, 2019 and must occur first, a producer waiting until Oct. 7, 2019 to enroll is afforded the opportunity to enroll in either program for both 2019 and 2020 during the same office visit.

For crops year 2021 through 2023, producers will have an opportunity to make new elections. Farm owners cannot enroll in either program unless they have a share interest in the farm.

Updated provisions in the 2018 Farm Bill allow producers with an interest in a farm to enroll and select coverage in crop-by-crop ARC-County or PLC, or ARC-Individual for the entire farm, for program year 2019. The election applies to both the 2019 and 2020 crop years. If a producer fails to enroll by the deadline of March 15, 2020, the election defaults to the current election of the crops on the farm established under the 2014 Farm Bill. No payments will be earned in 2019 if the election defaults.

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In Soldotna, Alaska, River City Books will use a $13,525 REAP grant to build a 15-kilowatt solar photovoltaic array on the roof of the bookstore. This project is expected to lower the store’s electricity costs by an estimated $3,800 annually. The energy saved by this project is expected to be enough to power 2.5 homes for a year.

In Albany, Ore., Spring Hill Organic Farm will use a $19,915 REAP grant to purchase and install a 20-kilowatt solar photovoltaic array on the barn roof. This project will generate more than 27,000 kilowatt-hours of renewable electricity per year.

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### USDA Offers Disaster Assistance for New Jersey Farmers

A dairy operation that chooses to enroll for 2019 an established production history of 3 million pounds (30,000 cwt.) and elects the $9.50 coverage level on 95 percent of production will have access to a $375.00 in DMC payments. Producers who locked in coverage in the 2019 sign-up must certify the operation is producing and commercially marketing milk and pay the annual administrative fee during the 2020 enrollment period.

For example, a dairy operation that operates an intergenerational transfer between 2014 and 2019 will have a one-time opportunity to increase their established production history between the 2019 and 2020 annual coverage election periods. Retroactive payments based on the increased production history will apply for 2019 and 2020.

### 2019 Retroactive Intergenerational Transfers

A dairy operation may add to their approved production history for an intergenerational transfer when a spouse, child or grandchild joins a participating dairy operation. Non-ineligible relatives, such as siblings, cousins, nieces or nephews, cannot be eligible for a production history increase.

The increase to the established production history of the participating dairy operation will be determined by multiplying both the national rolling herd average data for the current year and in effect at the time of the intergenerational transfer and the quantity of cows purchased by the joining family member within 60 days of joining the dairy operation. For an intergenerational transfer to be recognized by FSA, the requesting dairy operation will need to provide the FSA office with ownership documentation for those entering the business.

Applications for an intergenerational transfer must be submitted by Dec. 6, 2019, for approval by the local USDA service center.

For additional 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 Offers Disaster Assistance for New Jersey Farmers

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, 2019. 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 the

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For more information, visit www.rd.usda.gov.

### 2019 Enrollment Deadline for the Dairy Margin Coverage Program Is Sept. 20

Authorized by the 2018 Farm Bill, the 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.

For 2020, dairy producers can sign up for coverage under DMC beginning Oct. 7 through Dec. 13, 2019. At the time of sign-up, dairy producers can choose between the $4.00 to $5.50 coverage levels.

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 are eligible for a 25 percent premium discount by locking in for five years of margin protection coverage. FSA has launched a new web visualization of the DMC data, which is available here.

Margin payments have triggered for each month from January through July. Dairy producers who elect higher coverage levels could be eligible for payments for all seven months. Under certain levels, the amount paid to dairy farmers will exceed the cost of the premium.

Producers who locked in coverage in the 2019 sign-up must certify the operation is producing and commercially marketing milk and pay the annual administrative fee during the 2020 enrollment period.

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.

### 2019 Retroactive Intergenerational Transfers

Participating dairy operations who had an intergenerational transfer between 2014 and 2019 will have a one-time opportunity to increase their established production history during the 2019 and 2020 annual coverage election periods. Retroactive payments based on the increased production history will apply for 2019 and 2020.

A dairy operation may add to their approved production history for an intergenerational transfer when a spouse, child or grandchild joins a participating dairy operation. Non-ineligible relatives, such as siblings, cousins, nieces or nephews, cannot be eligible for a production history increase.

The increase to the established production history of the participating dairy operation will be determined by multiplying both the national rolling herd average data for the current year and in effect at the time of the intergenerational transfer and the quantity of cows purchased by the joining family member within 60 days of joining the dairy operation. For an intergenerational transfer to be recognized by FSA, the requesting dairy operation will need to provide the FSA office with ownership documentation for those entering the business.

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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 disaster or disaster loss.

A list of counties that received qualifying disaster declarations and designations is available at farmers.gov/recover. 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 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. If a producer insured the crop in 2018 and 2019, they will receive the lesser of the two factors. Producers who purchased the highest level of coverage will receive 95 percent of the expected value.

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+. All producers receiving WHIP+ payments will be required to purchase crop insurance or NAP for the 2020 crop year.

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).

WHIP+ payments were paid. Producers who fail to purchase crop insurance for the next two crop years will not be eligible for WHIP+ payments for 2018 disasters.

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 not purchased without compensation due to the commercial milk price drop of a qualified counties in 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.

In addition, producers with trees, bushes or vines can receive cost-share assistance through FSA’s Tree Assistance Program (TAP) for the cost of replanting and rehabilitating eligible trees and the replacement of essential items such as equipment or livestock, reorganization of a farming operation or the refinance of certain debts.

The deadline to apply for these emergency loans is April 29, 2020.

Ocean, along with Bucks and Philadelphia counties in Pennsylvania, are also eligible to apply for emergency loans.

The deadline to apply for these emergency loans is April 29, 2020.

As under 2017 WHIP, WHIP+ will provide prevented planting assistance to uninsured producers, NAP producers and producers with decreasing indemnities. All 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 additional loss coverage.

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, the disaster relief measure expanded coverage of the 2017 WHIP to include losses from Hurricane Florence, Harvey, and Michael.

The WHIP+ payment factor ranges from 75 percent to 95 percent, depending on the level of crop insurance or NAP coverage that a producer obtained for the crop. Producers who did not purchase crop insurance in the next two applicable, consecutive years will be required to pay back the WHIP+ payment.

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

USDA Designates Burlington County, New Jersey, as a Primary Natural Disaster Area

Emergency Support to Producers in Surrounding New Jersey counties of Atlantic, Camden, Mercer, Monmouth, and Ocean Also Available.

New Jersey Disaster Declarations and Emergency Loan deadlines can be seen on our state website at www.fsa.usda.gov/newjersey.

WASHINGTON, Sept. 10 — Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue designated Burlington County, New Jersey, as a primary natural disaster area. Producers who suffered losses due to excessive rain, flash flooding, and flooding that occurred April 1, 2019, through June 21, 2019, may be eligible for U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) emergency loans.

As under 2017 WHIP, WHIP+ will provide prevented planting assistance to uninsured producers, NAP producers and producers with decreasing indemnities. All 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 additional loss coverage.

This natural disaster declaration 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 refinancing of certain debts.

Producers in the contiguous New Jersey counties of Atlantic, Camden, Mercer, Monmouth, and Ocean, along with Bucks and Philadelphia counties in Pennsylvania, may also apply for emergency loans.

The deadline to apply for these emergency loans is April 29, 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 Assistance for Tree Disaster Program, Livestock Indemnity Program, Operating and Farm 3 Capital Cost Share, 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.

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