


 Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

# NEWSLETTER

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## New Jersey State FSA Newsletter

**New Jersey  
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[Kevin Murphy](#)
**Visit the New Jersey FSA website  
for more information at**  
[www.fsa.usda.gov/nj](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/nj)
**Deadlines**
**Nov. 20** - [NAP](#) Coverage Deadline  
for All Fruit trees, Caneberries,  
Grapes, and Blueberries

**Dec. 2** - Deadline for COC election  
ballots to be returned to County  
Offices or to be postmarked by

**Dec. 6** - [MFP](#) signup deadline

**Dec. 13** - [DMC](#) Dairy Program signup  
deadline.

 See all our regular program  
deadlines here:  
<https://www.fsa.usda.gov/state-offices/New-Jersey/state-events/index>
**USDA Establishes Domestic Hemp  
Production Program**

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue announced the establishment of the U.S. Domestic Hemp Production Program on October 29th. This program, as required by the 2018 Farm Bill, creates a consistent regulatory framework around hemp production throughout the United States.

“At USDA, we are always excited when there are new economic opportunities for our farmers, and we hope the ability to grow hemp will pave the way for new products and markets,” said Secretary Perdue. “We have had teams operating with all hands-on-deck to develop a regulatory framework that meets Congressional intent while seeking to provide a fair, consistent, and science-based process for states, tribes, and individual producers who want to participate in this program.”

An interim final rule formalizing the program was published in the Federal Register that will allow hemp to be grown under federally-approved plans and make hemp producers eligible for a number of agricultural programs. The rule includes provisions for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to approve hemp production plans developed by states and Indian tribes including: requirements for maintaining information on the land where hemp is produced; testing the levels of delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol; disposing of plants not meeting necessary requirements; and licensing requirements. It also establishes a federal plan for hemp producers in states or territories of Indian tribes that do not have their own approved hemp production plan.

 The interim final rule becomes effective upon publication in the Federal Register. Following publication, USDA invites public comment on the interim rule and the information collection burden. The [interim final rule](#) is posted on USDA’s website.

 USDA also developed guidelines for [sampling and testing procedures](#) that are being issued concurrently with this rule. These documents provide additional information for sampling agents and hemp testing laboratories.

 More information about the provisions of the interim final rule is available on the [U.S. Domestic Hemp Production Program](#) web page on the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) website.

 Once state and tribal plans are in place, hemp producers will be eligible for a number of USDA programs, including insurance coverage through Whole-Farm Revenue Protection. For information on available programs, visit [farmers.gov/hemp](http://farmers.gov/hemp).

**Missing a program deadline could cost you time and money. Receive reminders by signing up for our SMS texting service at [www.fsa.usda.gov/subscribe](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/subscribe) or by calling your [County Office](#).**

**Producers Urged to Consider NAP/Crop Insurance Coverage  
before November 20th Deadline**

***Basic NAP coverage is free and Buy-Up coverage premiums are 50% off for beginning, limited resource, minority and women farmers.***

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds producers to review available USDA crop risk protection options, including federal crop insurance and Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage, before the crop deadlines.

Federal crop insurance covers crop losses from natural adversities such as drought, hail and excessive moisture. NAP covers losses from natural disasters on crops for which no permanent federal crop insurance program is available, including perennial grass forage and grazing crops, fruits, vegetables, mushrooms, floriculture, ornamental nursery, aquaculture, turf grass, ginseng, honey, syrup, bioenergy, and industrial crops.

**NAP Buy-Up Coverage Option**

The 2018 Farm Bill reinstates higher levels of coverage, from 50 to 65 percent of expected production in 5 percent increments, at 100 percent of the average market price. Producers of organics and crops marketed directly to consumers also may exercise the “buy-up” option to obtain NAP coverage of 100 percent of the average market price at the coverage levels of between 50 and 65 percent of expected production. NAP basic coverage is available at 55 percent of the average market price for crop losses that exceed 50 percent of expected production.

Buy-up coverage is not available for crops intended for grazing.

**NAP Service Fees**

For all coverage levels, the NAP service fee is the lesser of \$325 per crop or \$825 per producer per county, not to exceed a total of \$1,950 for a producer with farming interests in multiple counties

**NAP Enhancements for Qualified Military Veterans**

The 2018 Farm Bill NAP amendments specify that qualified veteran farmers or ranchers are now eligible for a service fee waiver and premium reduction, if the NAP applicant meets certain eligibility criteria.

 Beginning, limited resource and targeted underserved farmers or ranchers remain eligible for a waiver of NAP service fees and premium reduction when they file form CCC-860, “*Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource and Beginning Farmer or Rancher Certification*.”

**Deadlines for 2020 crop year NAP Coverage:**

- **11/20/19** - All Fruit trees, Caneberries, Grapes, and Blueberries
- **12/1/19** – Honey

- **12/31/19** – Asparagus, Beets, Broccoli, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Greens, Herbs, Horseradish, Kohlrabi, Leeks, Lettuce, Parsnip, Peas, Radishes, Rhubarb, Turnips, Water Cress
- **03/15/20** – Beans, Brussel-Sprouts, Cantaloupes, Celery, Corn, Cucumbers, Eggplant, Honeydew, Oats, Okra, Peppers, Pumpkins, Sorghum, Soybeans, Squash, Sunflowers, Sweet Potatoes & Yams, Tomatillos, Tomatoes, Watermelons.

\*This is not an all-inclusive list of covered crops. For more information on the NAP Program please contact your local office for additional information.

For NAP application, eligibility and related program information, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/nap](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/nap) or contact your local USDA Service Center. To locate your local FSA office, visit [www.farmers.gov](http://www.farmers.gov).

Some crops are covered through independent crop insurance agents and are not eligible for NAP. For more info on crop insurance visit [www.rma.usda.gov](http://www.rma.usda.gov).

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## USDA Signup for Market Facilitation Program to Close Dec. 6

Signup 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, is open now through December 6, 2019. 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.

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

### 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 tranches, with the second and third tranches evaluated as market conditions and trade opportunities dictate. If conditions warrant, the second and third tranches 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](http://farmers.gov/mfp), including payment information and a program application.

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## FSA Offers Joint Financing Option on Direct Farm Ownership Loans

The USDA Farm Service Agency's (FSA) [Direct Farm Ownership loans](#) are a resource to help farmers and ranchers become owner-operators of family farms, improve and expand current operations, increase agricultural productivity, and assist with land tenure to save farmland for future generations.

Depending on the applicant's needs, there are three types of Direct Farm Ownership Loans: regular, down payment and joint financing. FSA also offers a [Direct Farm Ownership Microloan](#) option for smaller financial needs up to \$50,000.

Joint financing allows FSA to provide more farmers and ranchers with access to capital. FSA lends up to 50 percent of the total amount financed. A commercial lender, a State program or the seller of the property being purchased, provides the balance of loan funds, with or without an FSA guarantee. The maximum loan amount for a Joint Financing loan is \$600,000 and the repayment period for the loan is up to 40 years.

To be eligible, the operation must be an eligible farm enterprise. Farm Ownership loan funds cannot be used to finance nonfarm enterprises and all applicants must be able to meet general eligibility requirements. Loan applicants are also required to have participated in the business operations of a farm or ranch for at least three years out of the 10 years prior to the date the application is submitted. The applicant must show documentation that their participation in the business operation of the farm or ranch was not solely as a laborer.

For more information about FSA Loan programs, contact your local FSA office or visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov). To find your local FSA office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

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## Voting Begins for 2019 Farm Service Agency County Committee Elections

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) began mailing ballots on November 4 to eligible farmers and ranchers across the country for the Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committee elections.

County committee members play a key role at FSA. Over 7,000 members nationwide provide their valuable knowledge and judgment on decisions made about FSA services, including disaster and emergency programs.

To be counted, ballots must be returned to the local FSA county office or postmarked by December 2.

Each committee has three to 11 elected members who serve three-year terms of office. One-third of county committee seats are up for election each year. Newly elected committee members will take office January 1, 2020. County committee members help FSA make important decisions on its commodity support programs, conservation programs, indemnity and disaster programs, and emergency programs and eligibility.

Producers must participate or cooperate in an FSA program to be eligible to vote in the county committee election. Producers who supervise and conduct the farming operations of an entire farm, but are not of legal voting age, also may be eligible to vote.

Producers can find out if their local administrative area is up for election and if they are eligible to vote by contacting their local FSA county office or by visiting [www.fsa.usda.gov/nj/](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/nj/). Eligible voters who did not receive a ballot in the mail can pick one up at their local FSA county office. Visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/elections](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections) for more information.

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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).