USDA is Providing Additional Direct Assistance to Farmers Impacted by the Coronavirus

Producers can apply for assistance beginning Sept. 21, 2020.

Applying for Assistance

Visit our website at farmers.gov/cfap2.

Farm Service Agency

New Jersey Farm Service Agency

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State Committee:
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Kurt W. Astedt
Samuel G. Conard
Marly J. Buckler
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State Executive Director:
Barry Cathey

Farm Loan Chief:
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Deadlines
Visit our state website and click on Program Deadlines or download the latest version of our program calendar here.

CFAP 2 payments will be made for three categories of commodities – Price Trigger Commodities, Flat-rate Crops and Sales Commodities.

Price Trigger Commodities
Price trigger commodities are major commodities that meet a minimum 5 percent price decline over a specified period of time. Eligible price trigger crops include barley, corn, sorghum, soybeans, sunflowers, upland cotton, and all classes of wheat. Payments will be calculated based on 2020 planted acres of the crop, excluding prevented planting and experimental acres. Payments for price trigger crops will be the greater of 1) the eligible acres multiplied by a payment rate of $15 per acre; or 2) the eligible acres multiplied by the price trigger factor (the difference between the average marketing price and the trigger price) multiplied by a crop-specific payment rate, and then by the producer’s weighted 2020 Actual Production History (APH) approach, if the APH is not based on the 2019 Agriculture Risk Coverage-County Option (ARC-CO) benchmark yield for that crop to be used.

For broilers and eggs, payment will be based on 75 percent of the producers’ 2019 production.

Dairy (cow’s milk) payments will be based on actual milk production from April 1 to August 31, 2020. The milk production for Sept. 1, 2020, to Dec. 31, 2020, will be estimated by FSA.

Eligible beef cattle, hogs and pigs, and lambs and sheep payments will be based on the maximum number of eligible livestock to be slaughtered or sold, including breeding stock, on a date selected by the producer, between Apr. 16, 2020, and Aug. 31, 2020.

Flat-rate Crops
Crops that either do not meet the 5 percent price decline trigger or do not have data available to calculate a price change will have payments calculated based on eligible 2020 acres multiplied by $15 per acre. These crops include alfalfa hay, rice, field crops (including small grains, nursery crops, floriculture, and other commodities not included under the price trigger category that were grown for food, fiber, fur, or feathers). Payments will be based on 2020 planted acres of the crop, excluding prevented planting and experimental acres.

Sales Commodities
Sales commodities include specialty crops; aquaculture; nursery crops and floriculture; other commodities not included in the price trigger and flat-rate categories, including tobacco; goat milk; mink (including pelts, mohair, wool, and other livestock (excluding breeding stock) not included under the price trigger category that were grown for food, fiber, fur, or feathers). Payment calculations will use a sales-based approach, where producers are paid based on five categories: 1) the value of on-farm sales reduced by on-farm marketing costs; 2) the value of on-farm sales increased by associated marketing costs; 3) the value of sales to market reduced by on-farm marketing costs and a minimum 5 percent price decline; 4) the value of sales to market increased by associated marketing costs; or 5) the value of sales to market increased by associated marketing costs and a minimum 5 percent price decline over a specified period of time. Eligible price trigger crops include barley, corn, sorghum, soybeans, sunflowers, upland cotton, and all classes of wheat. Payments will be based on the maximum number of eligible livestock to be slaughtered or sold, including breeding stock, on a date selected by the producer, between Apr. 16, 2020, and Aug. 31, 2020.

Eligibility
There is a payment limitation of $250,000 per person or entity for all commodities combined. Applicants who are considered, listed under the family limited partnership (FLP) for the FSA Revenue Share Program may qualify for additional payment limits when members actively provide personal labor or personal management for the farm business in addition to the FLP. The family limited partnership provision has been expanded to include trusts and estates for both CFAP 1 and 2.

Producers will also have to certify they meet the Adjusted Gross Income limitation of $900,000 unless at least 75 percent or more of their income is derived from farming, ranching or forest-related activities. Producers must also be in compliance with Highly Erodable Land and Wetland Conservation provisions.

Applying for Assistance
Producers can apply for assistance beginning Sept. 21, 2020. Applications will be accepted through Dec. 11, 2020.

Additional information and application forms can be found at farmers.gov/cfap2. Documentation to support the producer’s application and certification may be requested. All other eligibility forms, such as those related to adjusted gross income and payment information, can be downloaded from farmers.gov/cfap2. For existing FSA customers, including those who participated in CFAP 1, many documents are likely already on file. Producers should check with FSA county office to see if any of the forms need to be updated.

Customers seeking one-on-one support with the CFAP 2 application process can call 877-568-4894 to speak directly with a USDA employee ready to offer assistance. This is a recommended first step before a producer engages with the team at the FSA county office.

All USDA Service Centers are open for business, including some that are open to visitors in person by appointment only. All Service Center visitors wishing to conduct business with FSA, Natural Resources Conservation Service or any other Service Center agency should call ahead and schedule an appointment. Service Centers that are open for appointments will pre-
The following exceptions apply to acreage reporting dates:

If a producer acquires additional acreage after the acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed. FSA staff will be able to assist producers in completing acreage reports, including providing maps.

NRCS offers free soil assessments to urban communities through their “Technical Assistance for Community Gardens,” program. This evaluation provides a trace metal content examination, general site and soil characterization, and information on soil health indices e.

The project is slated for completion in December 2020 but may never have gotten off the ground if not for the work of New Jersey Natural Resource Conservation Service soil scientist, Edwin Muniz, who provided a soil screening assessment for Fox in 2015.

As for Fox, he’s cautiously optimistic about the future for the neighborhood – one that has seen a lot of violence, including four murders in the last five years. “My hope is that this redevelopment project… will help prevent the next murder from happening. All behavior, and I imagined what effect the conditions of the neighborhood -- despair, hopelessness, abandonment, and criminal activity -- were having on the children. It was at that moment I decided that I wanted to take on the challenge of transforming the space,” Fox said.

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Since NRCS started providing these services in 2011, about 145 community gardens have been served. The major focus of the tests, especially in urban settings is the amount of lead and arsenic present. Depending on the amount, NRCS can recommend strategies to limit exposure, including maintaining an optimum pH level to improve available nutrients which will reduce the pathway for trace metal uptake, covering exposed soil with mulch to increase organic matter, and planting in raised garden beds.

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“All of his defenses was that the soil was heavily contaminated. However, he has no proof, so I had to show documentation that the soil wasn’t contaminated, and that was based on the soil screening done by NRCS,” Fox said.

For example, the following exceptions apply to acreage reporting dates:

• Sept 30 - Value Loss Crop (i.e. Aquaculture, Christmas trees, Flowers, Sod)
• Nov 15 - Fall Planted Small Grains
• Jan 2 - Honey

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers must file an accurate crop acreage report by the acreage reporting deadline. FSA staff will be able to assist producers in completing acreage reports, including providing maps.

• No crop has been planted by the 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 acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease.
Producers should also report crop acreage they intended to plant, but due to natural disaster, were unable to plant. Prevented planting acreage must be reported on form CCC-576, Notice of Loss, no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date as established by FSA and USDA’s Risk Management Agency.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policy holders 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.

For questions, please contact your local FSA office. To locate your local FSA office visit farmers.gov/service-center-locator.

Using FSA Direct Farm Ownership Loans for Construction

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.

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 $60,000.

Direct Farm Ownership Loans can be used to construct, purchase or improve farm dwellings, service buildings or other facilities, and to make improvements essential to an operation.

Applicants must provide FSA with an estimate of the total cost of all planned development that completely describe the work, prior to loan approval and must show proof of sufficient funds to pay for the total cost of all planned development at or before loan closing. In some instances, applicants may be asked to provide certified plans, specifications or contract documents. The applicant cannot incur any debt for materials or labor or make any expenditures for development purposes prior to loan closing with the expectation of being reimbursed from FSA funds.

Construction and development work may be performed either by the contract method or the borrower method. Under the contract method, construction and development contractors perform work according to a written contract with the applicant or borrower. If applying for an advance loan to finance a construction project, the applicant must obtain a surety bond that guarantees both payment and performance in the amount of the construction contract from a construction contractor.

A surety bond is required when a contract exceeds $100,000. An authorized agency official determines that a surety bond appears advisable to protect the borrower against default of the contractor or a contract provides for partial payments in excess of the amount of 90 percent of the value of the work in place.

Under the borrower method, the applicant or borrower will perform the construction and development work. The borrower method may only be used when the authorized agency official determines, based on information from the applicant, that the applicant possesses or arranges to obtain the necessary skill and managerial ability to complete the work satisfactorily and that such work will not interfere with the applicant’s farming operation or work schedule.

Potential applicants should visit with FSA early in the initial project planning process to ensure environmental compliance.

For more eligibility requirements and information about FSA Loan programs, contact your local USDA Service Center or visit fsa.usda.gov.

USDA Supports U.S. Seafood Industry Impacted by Retaliatory Tariffs

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will provide approximately $530 million to support the U.S. seafood industry and fishermen impacted by retaliatory tariffs from foreign governments. The funding will be provided through the Seafood Trade Relief Program and funded through the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC), administered by USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA).

Background:

The Seafood Trade Relief Program funding will support the following seafood types:

- Alaska mackerel
- Crab (Dungeness, King, Snow, Southern Tanner)
- Flounder
- Gooduck
- Goosefoot
- Herring
- Lobster
- Pacific Cod
- Pacific Ocean Perch
- Pollock
- Sablefish
- Salmon
- Sole
- Squid
- Tuna
- Turbot

Fishermen can sign-up for relief through the program from September 14, 2020 to December 14, 2020. Fishermen should apply through their local USDA Service Center. To find your local Service Center, visit www.farmers.gov/service-center-locator. The application can be found at www.farmers.gov/seafood.

All USDA Service Centers are open for business, including some that are open to visitors to conduct business in person by appointment only. All Service Center visitors wishing to conduct business with FSA, Natural Resources Conservation Service or any other Service Center agency should call ahead and schedule an appointment. Service Centers that are open for appointments will pre- screen visitors based on health concerns or recent travel, and visitors must adhere to social distancing guidelines. Visitors are also required to wear a face covering during their appointment. Our program delivery staff will be in the office, by phone and using online tools. More information can be found at farmers.gov/coronavirus.

Tree Assistance Program (TAP) Offers Assistance Due to Weather, Pest, and Disease Damage

Orchardists and nursery tree growers who experienced losses from natural disasters during calendar year 2020 must submit a TAP application either 90 calendar days after the disaster event or the date when the loss is apparent.

TAP provides financial assistance to qualifying orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes and vines damaged by natural disasters.

Eligible tree types include trees, bushes or vines that produce an annual crop for commercial purposes. Nursery trees include ornamental, fruit, nut and Christmas trees that are produced for commercial sale. Trees used for pulp or timber are ineligible.

To qualify for TAP, orchardists must suffer a qualifying tree, bush or vine loss in excess of 15 percent mortality from an eligible natural disaster, plus an adjustment for normal mortality. The eligible trees, bushes or vines that have been owned when the natural disaster occurred; however, eligible growers are not required to own the land on which the eligible trees, bushes and vines were planted.

If the TAP application is approved, the eligible trees, bushes and vines must be replaced within 12 months from the date the application is approved. The cumulative total quantity of acres planted to

USDA Service Center or visit fsa.usda.gov.

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trees, bushes or vines, for which a producer can receive TAP payments, cannot exceed 1,000 acres annually.

Click here to read the TAP Fact Sheet

USDA Adds Flexibilities for Crop Insurance

You can continue to work with your Approved Insurance Providers on policies, claims, and agreements. If you have crop insurance questions or other needs, you should continue to contact your insurance agents about conducting business by telephone or email.

USDA’s Risk Management Agency is working with those insurance providers to provide additional flexibilities in response to COVID-19, including:

- Enabling producers to send notifications and reports electronically
- Extending the date for production reports
- Providing additional time and deferring interest on premium and other payments
- Authorizing replant self-certification
- Waiving the witness signature requirement for approval of Assignments of Indemnity
- Allowing dumped milk to be counted as milk marketings for the Dairy Revenue Production (DRP) or actual marketings for the Livestock Gross Margin for Dairy (LGM-Dairy) programs
- Allowing phone and electronic transactions for 2021 crop year sales and reporting dates, including options and endorsements
- Extending the deadline for some perennial crop Pre-Acceptance Inspection Reports (PAIRs)
- Waiving the 2021 crop year inspection requirements for the Nursery and Nursery Value Select (NVSS) programs in certain cases
- Authorizing AIPs to allow organic producers to report acreage as certified organic, or transitioning to organic, for the 2020 crop year if they can show they have requested a written certification from a certifying agent by their policy’s acreage reporting date.

For more in-depth information on these flexibilities, visit farmers.gov/coronavirus.

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).