More than $7 Billion Paid in Second Round of USDA Coronavirus Food Assistance Program

Producers do not need to show a loss to be eligible for CFAP 2

More than $7 Billion Paid in Second Round of USDA Coronavirus Food Assistance Program

USDA announced that in the first month of the application period, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) approved more than $7 billion in financial assistance payments to producers in the past round of the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program. CFAP 2 provides agricultural producers with financial assistance to help absorb some of the increased marketing costs associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since CFAP 2 enrollment began on September 21, FSA has approved more than 443,000 applications. The top five states for payments are Iowa, Nebraska, Minnesota, Illinois and Kansas.

Eligible Commodities

CFAP 2 supports eligible producers of crops, livestock, specialty crops, dairy, aquaculture, and many other commodities, including many that were ineligible for CFAP 1. FSA’s CFAP 2 Eligible Commodities Finder makes finding eligible commodities and payment rates simple. Access this tool and other resources at farmers.gov/cfap.

Getting Help from FSA

New customers seeking one-on-one support with the CFAP 2 application process can call 877-508-8384 to speak directly with a USDA employee ready to offer general assistance. This is a recommended first step before a producer engages the team at the FSA county office at their local USDA Service Center.

More Information

To find the latest information on CFAP 2, visit farmers.gov/CFAP or call your local county office.

NRCS Announces EQIP Signup for 2021 Funding

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has extended the application deadlines to November 20, 2020 for New Jersey’s agricultural producers to implement conservation practices on their land through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). EQIP Conservation Activity Plans (CAP) and EQIP Initiatives are initiatives for the following Regional Conservation Partnership Programs (RCPP) – EQIP projects (Delaware River Watershed Working Lands Conservation, Whole Farm Systems Conservation Trail, Black River Greenway- Soil and Water Protection), and the Agricultural Management Assistance Program (AMA) will also now be accepted during this period.

“EQIP’s fundamental purpose is to promote agricultural production, forest management and environmental quality as compatible goals,” said New Jersey State Conservationist Julie Hawkins.

“NRCS soil conservationists are available to help New Jersey private land managers assess the natural resources on their property and suggest conservation practices that can be planned and implemented with NRCS assistance,” said Barry Calogero, New Jersey NRCS State Conservationist.

NRCS soil conservationists are available to help New Jersey private land managers assess the natural resources on their property and suggest conservation practices that can be planned and implemented with NRCS assistance. Our NJ EQIP program provides financial assistance for a variety of conservation issues, such as water quality degradation, soil erosion, soil quality degradation and inadequate habitat for fish and wildlife.

Initiatives in New Jersey include the Golden Winged Warbler Initiative in North Jersey and the National Water Quality Initiative in South Jersey. Last year, NRCS provided over $5.7 million in EQIP financial assistance to New Jersey producers.

Agricultural Management Assistance is a voluntary conservation program available to beginning and limited resource farmers, small farms, and producers who have had limited participation in USDA financial assistance programs. Producers eligible for ACP can apply for financial and technical assistance to voluntarily address resource issues such as water management, water quality, and erosion control by incorporating conservation into their farming operations.
NRCS provides financial and technical assistance to help agricultural producers address resource concerns through conservation programs authorized by the Farm Bill. NRCS accepts applications for conservation programs year-round and are processed when funding becomes available. Interested producers should visit their local NRCS service center and the NY NRCS website for more information.

Enrollment Begins for Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage Programs for 2021

Agricultural producers can now make elections and enroll in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for the 2021 crop year. The signup period opened Tuesday, October 13. These key U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) safety-net programs help producers weather fluctuation in either revenue or price for certain crops, and more than $5 billion in payments are in the process of going out to producers who signed up for the 2019 crop year. Enrollment for the 2021 crop year closes March 15, 2021.

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 the commodity falls below its reference price.

Covered commodities include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambie, 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.

2021 Elections and Enrollment

Producers can elect coverage and enroll in crop-by-crop ARC-County or PLC, or ARC-Individual for the entire farm, for the 2021 crop year. Although election changes for 2021 are optional, enrollment (sign-on contract) is required for each year of the program. If a producer has a multi-year contract on the farm and makes an election change for 2021, it will be necessary to sign a new contract.

If an election is not submitted by the deadline of March 15, 2021, the election defaults to the current election for crops on the farm the producer elected for crop year 2019.

For crop years 2022 and 2023, producers will have an opportunity to make new elections during those signups. Farm owners cannot enroll in either program unless they have a share interest in the farm.

Web-Based Decision Tools

In partnership with USDA, the University of Illinois and Texas A&M University offer web-based decision tools to assist producers in making informed, educated decisions using crop data specific to their respective farming operations. Tools include:

- **Gardner-farmdoc Payment Calculator**, the University of Illinois tool that offers farmers the ability to run payment estimate modeling for their farms and counties for ARC-County and PLC.
- **ARC and PLC Decision Tool**, the Texas A&M tool allows producers to analyze payment yield updates and expected payments for 2021. Producers who have used the tool in the past should see their username and much of their farm data already available in the system.

2019 Crop Year ARC and PLC Payments

FSA began processing payments last week for 2019 ARC-County (ARC-CCO) and PLC on covered commodities that met payment triggers for the 2019 crop year. In addition to the $5 billion now in process, FSA anticipates it will issue additional payments by the end of November for 2019 commodities covered under ARC-Individual (ARC-IC) and additional commodities that trigger ARC and PLC payments for which rates have not yet been published.

Producers who had 2019 covered commodities enrolled in ARC-County can visit the ARC and PLC webpage for payment rates applicable to their county and each covered commodity. For farms and covered commodities enrolled in 2019 PLC, the following crops met payment triggers: barley, canola, chickpeas (small and large), corn, dry peas, grain sorghum, lentils, peanuts, seed cotton and wheat.

Oats and soybeans did not meet 2019 PLC payment triggers.

2019 PLC payment rates for the following covered commodities have not been determined: crambe, flaxseed, long and medium grain rice, mustard seed, rapeseed, safflower, sesame seed, sunflower seed and temperate Japonica rice. Payment rates for these commodities will be announced at a later date.

For more information

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](https://www.fSA.gov/pricesupport).

For additional questions and assistance, contact your local USDA service center. To locate your local FSA office, visit [farmers.gov/service-locator](https://www.farmers.gov/service-locator).

Farm Storage Facility Loan Rates as Low as 0.125%

FSA’s Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program provides low-interest financing to producers to build or upgrade storage facilities and to purchase portable (new or used) structures, equipment and storage and handling trucks.

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**Rates for loans approved in November 2020**

- **3 year loan – 0.125%**
- **5 year loan – 0.250%**
- **7 year loan – 0.500%**
- **10 year loan – 0.750%**
- **12 year loan – 0.875%**

The low-interest funds can be used to build or upgrade permanent facilities to store commodities. Eligible commodities include corn, grain sorghum, rice, soybeans, oats, peanuts, wheat, barley, milo, oats, sunflowers harvested as whole grain, pulse crops (lentils, chickpeas and dry peas), hay, honey, renewable biomass, fruits, nuts and vegetables for cold storage facilities, floriculture, hops, maple sap, rice, milk, cheese, butter, palm, canola and soybeans for biodiesel, and aquaculture feed (excluding systems that maintain live animals through uptake and discharge of water). Qualified facilities include grain bins, hay barns and cold storage facilities for eligible commodities.

Wool has recently been added as an eligible commodity under FSFL.

Loans up to $50,000 can be secured by a promissory note/security agreement. Loans exceeding $100,000 require additional collateral.

Producers do not need to demonstrate the lack of commercial credit availability to apply. The loans are designed to assist a diverse range of farming operations, including small and mid-sized businesses, new farmers, operations supplying local food and farmers markets, non-traditional farm products, and underserved producers.

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](https://www.fSA.gov/pricesupport).

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For additional questions and assistance, contact your local USDA service center. To locate your local FSA office, visit [farmers.gov/service-locator](https://www.farmers.gov/service-locator).

USDAs Announces Increased Subsidies and Other Improvements to the Livestock Risk Protection Insurance Program

The USDA’s Risk Management Agency (RMA) announced it is increasing premium subsidies and will make other improvements to the Livestock Risk Protection (LRP) plan of insurance for feeder cattle, fed cattle and swine starting with the 2021 crop year. The increased premium subsidy is retroactive to the farm year. Producers who enrolled in LRP for the 2019 crop year will see their premium subsidy increase to 35% of the net insurance cost for the 2020 crop year and continuing through the 2021 crop year.
USDA Reminds New Jersey Farmers of the November 15 Acreage Reporting Deadline

USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices in New Jersey are currently open to phone and virtual appointments only but can still work with producers on timely filing crop acreage reports. FSA staff can provide assistance over the phone, by email and through virtual meetings via Microsoft Teams.

The following up coming acreage reporting dates are applicable in New Jersey:

- 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 applicable deadline. FSA staff will be available to assist producers in completing acreage reports, including providing maps.

FSA county offices in New Jersey will be happy to provide maps to producers through mail, email or local pick-up with instructions for completing the maps. After planting is complete, producers should return completed maps and the acreage reporting sheet as directed by their local office.

FSA offices are using Microsoft Teams software to virtually meet with producers to review maps and documents for certification. Producers who want to schedule a virtual appointment can download the Microsoft Teams app on their smart phones and call the FSA office for an appointment. You can also use Microsoft Teams from your personal computer without downloading software.

After completed maps and all acreage reporting information is received, FSA will make software updates and provide producers the completed Report of Acreage form (FSA-576) to sign. Producers must return the signed form certifying their acreage report to the FSA office by the reporting deadline above.

The following exceptions apply to acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not 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 calendars days after purchase or acquiring the lease.

Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office.

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.

Farmers.gov Feature Helps Producers Find Farm Loans that Fit Their Operation

Farmers and ranchers can use the Farm Loan Discovery Tool on farmers.gov to find information on USDA farm loans that may best fit their operations.

USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers a variety of loan options to help farmers finance their operations. From buying land to financing the purchase of equipment, FSA loans can help.

Farmers can access the Farm Loan Discovery Tool by visiting farmers.gov and clicking the “Start” button. Follow the prompts and answer five simple questions to receive loan information that is applicable to your agricultural operation. The tool is built to run on any modern browser like Chrome, Edge, Firefox, or the Safari browser, and is fully functional on mobile devices. It does not work in Internet Explorer.

About Farmers.gov

In 2018, USDA unveiled farmers.gov, a dynamic, mobile-friendly public website combined with an authenticated portal where farmers will be able to apply for programs, process transactions, and manage accounts.

The Farm Loan Discovery Tool is one of many resources on farmers.gov to help connect farmers to information that can help their operations. Earlier this year, USDA launched the My Farm Plan. Information feature, which enables farmers to view their loan information, history, payments, and alerts by logging into the website.

USDA is building farmers.gov for farmers, by farmers. In addition to the interactive farm loan features, the site also offers a Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool. Farmers can visit farmers.gov/recover/disaster-assistance-tool#step-1 to find disaster assistance programs that can help their operation recover from natural disasters.

For more information, contact your local USDA Service Center or visit farmers.gov.