

October 2020



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

# NEWSLETTER

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## New Mexico FSA Newsletter

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### New Mexico Farm Service Agency

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[www.fsa.usda.gov/nm](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/nm)

**State Executive Director:**  
[Michael S. White](#)

**Executive Officer:**  
[Brenda Archuleta](#)

**Farm Loan Chief:**  
[LeAnn Gibbs](#)

**District Directors:**  
[Andrew Flores](#)  
[Oscar Rivera](#)  
[Rhonda Mitchell](#)

**State Committee:**  
Chair, Alisa Ogden  
Vice Chair, Matthew Lansford  
Member, John M. Romero  
Member, Dustin K. Johnson  
Member, Monte Anderson

To find contact information for your local office go to [www.fsa.usda.gov/NM](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/NM)

### Message from the State Executive Director

Michael S. White, New Mexico State Executive Director wants to provide information on the following:

#### Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) 2.0

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Stability Act (CARES Act) and the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) Charter Act authorized the funds for the original CFAP. CCC funds will be used for CFAP 2, with the exception of tobacco, which will use remaining CARES Act funds.

FSA is accepting applications for CFAP 2 from **September 21, 2020, to December 11, 2020.** Please visit <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/state-offices/New-Mexico/index>, [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov) or [www.farmers.gov](http://www.farmers.gov) for more information.

#### Dairy Margin Coverage Program (DMC)

Signup for the 2021 calendar year opened October 13, 2020 and runs through **December 11, 2020.**

#### Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program Plus (WHIP+)

FSA opened signup September 11, 2020 for WHIP+ to help producers affected by natural disasters in 2018 and 2019 and closes on **October 30, 2020.**

#### Noninsured Assistance Program (NAP)

Application Closing Date deadlines to purchase 2021 crop coverage under the NAP are fast approaching:

**Crop**

**Application Closing Date**

Apples, Apricots, Cherries, November 20, 2020  
Caneberries, Grapes, Nectarines,  
Pears, Pistachios, Plumes  
Grass, Honey, Lettuce December 1, 2020

Also a reminder, if you have 2021 NAP coverage on grass and intend to graze the crop, the last day to report the crop acreage is December 16, 2020. Reporting acreage after this date will assess a late file fee, which includes \$30 base fee, plus \$16 for the hour and \$8 for every 30 minutes after the first hour. Minimum of one (1) hour. Producers who pay the late fee may be covered under these provisions until the acreage reporting date of the subsequent year.

### **Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)**

All CRP participants with CRP-1 (CRP Contracts) are required to perform at least one management activity before the end of year 6 on a 10 year contract and end of year 13 on a 15 year contract. Please contact your local FSA office to obtain the status of your CRP contract. Click [here](#) to obtain County Office contact information.

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## **New USDA Survey to Measure Areas for Improvement**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced a new annual survey of farmers, ranchers and private forestland owners. The survey will help USDA understand what it is doing well and where improvements are needed, specifically at the Farm Service Agency (FSA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Risk Management Agency (RMA).

A selection of 28,000 producers will receive the survey over the next few weeks, but all farmers are encouraged to take the survey at [farmers.gov/survey](http://farmers.gov/survey).

This survey is part of the President's Management Agenda. It requires High Impact Service Provider agencies across the federal government, including FSA and NRCS, to conduct annual surveys to measure and respond to areas needing improvement.

The survey consists of 20 questions and takes approximately 10 minutes to complete. Responses are confidential, and individual responses will be aggregated. The survey will be open for at least six weeks and will be closed once USDA receives a 30% response rate.

Learn more and take the survey at [www.farmers.gov/survey](http://www.farmers.gov/survey).

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## **First Ever Opportunity for Urban Growers to Serve on USDA County Committees**

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) is currently accepting nominations for its first ever Urban and Suburban County Committees. These new committees are part of USDA's efforts to better support urban and suburban agriculture.

The first five locations include Albuquerque, N.M.; Cleveland, Ohio; Philadelphia, Pa.; Portland, Ore.; and Richmond, Va. An additional five cities will be announced later this fall.

The urban and suburban county committees will consist of three to 11 members who will work to encourage and promote urban, indoor, and other emerging agricultural production practices. They may also address areas such as food access, community engagement, support of local activities to promote and encourage community compost, and food waste reduction.

This is an exciting new opportunity for urban growers to represent the needs of urban agriculture in their city and set priorities and impact programs and services offered at the local level.

Committee members meet at least quarterly and terms are three years. Urban farmers who participate or cooperate in an FSA program in the county selected may either be nominated or may nominate themselves or others as a candidate.

To be considered, a producer must sign an FSA-669A nomination form. The form and other information about FSA county committee elections are available at [fsa.usda.gov/elections](https://fsa.usda.gov/elections). All nomination forms for the urban and suburban county committees must be postmarked or received in the local FSA office by Oct. 2. Election ballots will be mailed to eligible voters by Oct 23.

More information about Urban County Committees can be found at [farmers.gov/urban](https://farmers.gov/urban).

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## Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2

Signup for the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2 (CFAP 2) began on Sept. 21, 2020 and will continue through Dec. 11, 2020. CFAP 2 provides eligible producers with direct financial assistance due to market disruptions and associated costs because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Check out our [brief video](#) about the program.

CFAP 2 is a separate program from the first round of the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program, now referred to as CFAP 1. Farmers and ranchers who participated in CFAP 1 will not be automatically enrolled and must complete a new application for CFAP 2. Details on how to apply can be found on [farmers.gov/cfap/apply](https://farmers.gov/cfap/apply).

### CFAP 2 Eligible Commodities Finder

Many more commodities are eligible for CFAP 2 than CFAP 1. Interested in finding the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2 payment rates for the eligible commodities you grow or raise? Our new, easy-to-use [CFAP 2 Eligible Commodities Finder](#) makes finding payment rates specific to your operation simple. From yam to alpaca farmers – and everyone in between – the payment rate information you need is just a few clicks away. Try it today on your desktop, tablet, or mobile device.

### Call Center

A call center is available for producers who would like additional one-on-one support with the CFAP 2 application process. Please call 877-508-8364 to speak directly with a USDA employee ready to offer assistance. The call center can provide service to non-English speaking customers. Customers will select 1 for English and 2 to speak with a Spanish speaking employee. For other languages, customers select 1 and indicate their language to the call center staff.

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## USDA to Provide Additional Direct Assistance to Farmers and Ranchers Impacted by the Coronavirus

USDA announced up to an additional \$14 billion for agricultural producers who continue to face market disruptions and associated costs because of COVID-19. Signup for the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP 2) will begin September 21 and run through December 11, 2020.

### Background:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will use funds being made available from the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) Charter Act and CARES Act to support row crops, livestock, specialty crops, dairy, aquaculture and many additional commodities. USDA has incorporated improvements in CFAP 2 based from stakeholder engagement and public feedback to better meet the needs of impacted farmers and ranchers.

Producers can apply for CFAP 2 at USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) county offices. This program provides financial assistance that gives producers the ability to absorb increased marketing costs associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Producers will be compensated for ongoing market disruptions and assisted with the associated marketing costs.

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 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 a nationwide crop marketing percentage, multiplied by a crop-specific payment rate, and then by the producer's weighted 2020 Actual Production History (APH) approved yield. If the APH is not available, 85 percent of the 2019 Agriculture Risk Coverage-County Option (ARC-CO) benchmark yield for that crop will be used.

For broilers and eggs, payments 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 Aug. 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 owned inventory of eligible livestock, excluding 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, extra long staple (ELS) cotton, oats, peanuts, rice, hemp, millet, mustard, safflower, sesame, triticale, rapeseed, and several others.

**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 payment gradations associated with their 2019 sales.

Additional commodities are eligible in CFAP 2 that weren't eligible in the first iteration of the program. If your agricultural operation has been impacted by the pandemic since April 2020, we encourage you to apply for CFAP 2. A complete list of eligible commodities, payment rates and calculations can be found on [farmers.gov/cfap](https://farmers.gov/cfap).

**Eligibility** There is a payment limitation of \$250,000 per person or entity for all commodities combined. Applicants who are corporations, limited liability companies, limited partnerships may qualify for additional payment limits when members actively provide personal labor or personal management for the farming operation. In addition, this special payment limitation 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 forestry-related activities. Producers must also be in compliance with Highly Erodible 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/cfap](https://farmers.gov/cfap). 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/cfap/apply](https://farmers.gov/cfap/apply). 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 877-508-8364 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 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, and they will be working with our producers in the office, by phone and using online tools. More information can be found at [farmers.gov/coronavirus](https://farmers.gov/coronavirus).

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## 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](https://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.

USDA conducted field research in eight states, gathering input from farmers and FSA farm loan staff to better understand their needs and challenges.

### How the Tool Works

Farmers who are looking for financing options to operate a farm or buy land can answer a few simple questions about what they are looking to fund and how much money they need to borrow. After submitting their answers, farmers will receive information on farm loans that best fit their specific needs. The loan application and additional resources also will be provided.

Farmers can download application quick guides that outline what to expect from preparing an application to receiving a loan decision. There are four guides that cover loans to individuals, entities, and youth, as well as information on microloans. The guides include general eligibility requirements and a list of required forms and documentation for each type of loan. These guides can help farmers prepare before their first USDA service center visit with a loan officer.

Farmers can access the *Farm Loan Discovery Tool* by visiting [farmers.gov/fund](https://farmers.gov/fund) 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](https://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](https://farmers.gov) to help connect farmers to information that can help their operations. Earlier this year, USDA launched the *My Financial Information* feature, which enables farmers to view their loan information, history, payments, and alerts by logging into the website.

USDA is building [farmers.gov](https://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](https://farmers.gov/recover/disaster-assistance-tool#step-1) to find disaster assistance programs that can help their operation recover from natural disasters.

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## Communication is Key in Lending

Farm Service Agency (FSA) is committed to providing our farm loan borrowers the tools necessary to be successful. FSA staff will provide guidance and counsel from the loan application process through the borrower's graduation to commercial credit. While it is FSA's commitment to advise borrowers as they identify goals and evaluate progress, it is crucial for borrowers to communicate with their farm loan staff when changes occur. It is the borrower's responsibility to alert FSA to any of the following:

- Any proposed or significant changes in the farming operation
- Any significant changes to family income or expenses
- The development of problem situations
- Any losses or proposed significant changes in security

If a farm loan borrower can't make payments to suppliers, other creditors, or FSA on time, contact your farm loan staff immediately to discuss loan servicing options.

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## Ask USDA available to answer questions about FSA programs

Ask USDA is now available as a tool for FSA customers to ask questions about FSA programs and services.

Ask USDA, available at [ask.usda.gov](https://ask.usda.gov) is similar to AskFSA, which was decommissioned Sept. 21, but it also provides information for all USDA programs. Ask USDA allows USDA customers to search for and read answers about FSA programs and services in the same location as they read about other USDA programs and services.

Customers are able to submit questions through email, chat, and phone if they need more information. This improved customer service approach further builds on Secretary Sonny Perdue's OneUSDA vision and provides the customer a one-stop shopping experience that covers all of USDA's many programs.

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## Know your Final Planting Dates

All producers are encouraged to contact their local FSA office for more information on the final planting date for specific crops. The final planting dates vary by crop, planting period and county so please contact your local FSA office for a list of county-specific planting deadlines. The timely planting of a crop, by the final planting date, may prevent loss of program benefits.

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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).