A Message from the State Executive Director

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Was Your Operation Impacted by the Coronavirus Pandemic?
The USDA FSA is here to support you and your operation through our Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP). Whether you farm one acre or many more, grow food for local markets or big supply chains, CFAP can help. We’re accepting applications through August 28 and encouraging producers to apply now, as we are only three weeks away from this deadline.

In Ohio, we have already approved 12,879 applications and disbursed more than $138M as of August 3, 2020. I know many farmers have applied for CFAP already, but the numbers indicate that some who are eligible have not. If you’re still unsure about CFAP and your operation, I encourage you to take five minutes to learn more. You can view details about CFAP and submit your application online at fsa.usda.gov/cfap.

Thank you for your service to our nation’s farmers and rural communities.

Leonard Hubert
State Executive Director

Ohio Farm Service Agency State Office

200 North High Street
Room 540
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Phone: 614-255-2441
FAX: 855-832-5100

State Executive Director: Leonard Hubert

Administrative Officer: Traci Garza
Conservation Chief:
Brandi Koehler

Farm Loan Chief:
David Drake

Price Support Chief:
Mark VanHoose

Production Adjustment,
Compliance and Risk
Management Chief:
Matt Kleski

State Committee Members:
Trish Levering, Chair
Ronnie Clifton
Daryl Knipp
Chase Powell
Joe Steiner

Visit the Ohio FSA website for additional information at: www.fsa.usda.gov/oh

Please contact your FSA County Office for questions specific to your operation.

Current FSA Farm Loan Interest Rates

Current Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) Interest Rates

We know you’re busy, so we’ve outlined options to apply at the top of farmers.gov/cfap. We offer a CFAP Application Portal where those of you with eAuthentication accounts can submit your application online. Don’t have an eAuthentication account? You can enroll at farmers.gov/sign-in. We also offer a manual application option, and a CFAP Application Generator and Payment Calculator that allows you to input information specific to your operation to determine estimated payments and populate the application form.

Additionally, with this already being a busy time of year for our staff as they finish up certifying acreage, we also add in sign-ups for the Wildfire Hurricane Indemnity Program (WHIP+), CLEAR30 and Continuous CRP as well as our Farm Loan teams continue to be very busy serving our producers across the state. I am very impressed with the continued level of great customer service our staff provide to the agriculture producers of Ohio during these unprecedented times.

We have a great deal of activity going on in our county offices, please take a moment to consider whether you have business that needs to be addressed with your FSA County office. Additional program details and more in-depth information is provided in our newsletter.

As a reminder, all FSA visitors wishing to conduct business should call ahead to confirm their FSA County office is able to accept in-person appointments and schedule the visit and to confirm the office’s status and make an appointment before visiting.

- Visitors will be pre-screened based on health concerns or recent travel and must adhere to social distancing guidelines.
- Visitors may also be required to wear a face covering during their appointment.
- Field work will continue with appropriate social distancing. Our program delivery staff will be in the office and work with our producers in person, by phone, by email, or by using other online tools.

County-level information on FSA Service Center status will be updated regularly and you can learn the status of your FSA County office at: https://www.farmers.gov/coronavirus/service-center-status. Note: Please use the latest versions of Chrome, Edge, or Safari for the best experience. The Farmers.gov website is not recommended for the Internet Explorer browser.

I am asking for your help so our staff can continue to provide the best service to you. The necessity to conduct FSA business by means other than face to face continues to be very important. If you have changed your home phone number, cell phone number or email address be sure to provide your FSA County office with the updated contact information. This will allow our staff an opportunity to keep producers informed of program announcement and deadlines, reporting requirements and other important updates. Our staff has the ability to send short SMS messages and emails to producers, to keep you updated on programs. To subscribe, visit fsa.usda.gov/subscribe to sign-up
and receive emails and text messages. Producers can also ask our staff for assistance to subscribe for these services.

Thank you for your continued kindness and patience as we continue to adjust to the new normal approaches to business while our staff administers heavy workloads.

Respectfully,

Leonard Hubert

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**CLEAR30 the first USDA program to offer 30-year Signup - Deadline Quickly Approaches to Signup**

FSA is piloting a new program that offers farmers and landowners an opportunity to enroll in a 30-year Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contract, called CLEAR30. The program is available to farmers and landowners with expiring water-quality practice CRP contracts in the Great Lakes and Chesapeake Bay regions. **The program signup period ends Aug. 21, 2020.**

The pilot is available in Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia and Wisconsin. Eligible producers must have expiring Clean Lakes, Estuaries and Rivers (CLEAR) initiative contracts, including continuous CRP Cropland contracts with water-quality practices or marginal pasturelands CRP contracts devoted to riparian buffers, wildlife habitat buffers or wetland buffers.

The longer contracts will help ensure that practices remain in place for 30 years, which will help reduce sediment and nutrient runoff and help prevent algal blooms. Traditional CRP contracts run from 10 to 15 years.

Annual rental payment for landowners who enroll in CLEAR30 will be equal to the current Continuous CRP annual payment rate plus an inflationary adjustment of 27.5 percent, since CLEAR30 contracts will be for 30 years – much longer than the 10 to 15-year contracts for Continuous CRP offers.

Another unique program feature is that FSA will help producers maintain CLEAR30 contract acreage.

Contact your [FSA County Office](https://www.fsa.usda.gov/county) for more details about CLEAR30.

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**FSA Is Accepting CRP Continuous Enrollment Offers**

FSA is accepting offers for specific conservation practices under the [Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Continuous Signup](https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programsoptions/contcrp), however the deadline to submit an offer for re-enrollment of a Continuous Signup contract (including CREP) is August 21.

In exchange for a yearly rental payment, farmers enrolled in the program agree to remove environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production and to plant species that will improve environmental health and quality. The program’s long-term goal is to re-establish valuable land cover to improve water quality, prevent soil erosion, and reduce loss of wildlife habitat. Contracts for land enrolled in CRP are 10-15 years in length.

Under continuous CRP signup, environmentally sensitive land devoted to certain conservation practices can be enrolled in CRP at any time. Offers for continuous enrollment are not subject to
competitive bidding during specific periods. Instead they are automatically accepted provided the
land and producer meet certain eligibility requirements and the enrollment levels do not exceed the
statutory cap.

For more information, including a list of acceptable practices, visit fsa.usda.gov/crp or contact
your FSA County Office for more details.

USDA Offers Annual Installment Deferral Option for Farm Storage Facility Loan Borrowers

To assist Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) borrowers experiencing financial hardship from the
pandemic and other challenges in production agriculture, USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) is
offering a one-time annual installment payment deferral option. No fees or prepayment penalties
apply for borrowers who choose this FSFL loan flexibility option.

Eligible borrowers can request a one-time only annual installment payment deferral for loans having
terms of three, five, seven or ten years. The installment deferral option is not available for 12-year
term loans.

The FSFL installment payments will remain the same, except for the last year. The original loan
interest rate and annual payment due date will remain the same. However, because the installment
payment deferral is a one-year loan term extension, the final payment will be higher due to
additional accrued interest.

Borrowers interested in exercising the one-time annual installment deferral option should contact
FSA to make the request and to obtain, complete and sign required forms.

FSFLs provide low-interest financing for producers to store, handle and transport eligible
commodities.

More Information

In addition to offering flexibilities for FSFLs, FSA has also made other flexibilities to help producers
impacted by the pandemic, including relaxing the loan-making process for farm operating and
ownership loans and implementing the Disaster Set-Aside provision that enables an upcoming
installment on a direct loan to be set aside for the year. More information on these flexibilities can
be found at farmers.gov/coronavirus.

Contact your FSA County office for more information.

FSA Adds Farm Loan Flexibilities

Farm loans are critical for annual operating and family living expenses, emergency needs and cash
flow, especially in tough times. FSA is providing additional flexibilities to provide producers with
credit options. We encourage direct loan applicants and borrowers to contact their FSA County
Office to discuss these programs and any current, and future, temporary changes to farm loan
deadlines and the loan servicing options available. Customers participating in FSA’s guaranteed
loan programs are encouraged to contact their lender. For a full list of flexibilities, visit
farmers.gov/coronavirus.
One-Time PLC Yield Updates – Deadline September 30

Farm owners have a one-time opportunity to update PLC yields of covered commodities on the farm, regardless of Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program election. **The deadline to request a PLC yield update is September 30, 2020.**

The updated yield will be equal to 90 percent of the average yield per planted acre in crop years 2013-2017 (excluding any year where the applicable covered commodity was not planted), subject to the ratio obtained by dividing the 2008-2012 average national yield by the 2013-2017 average national yield for the covered commodity. If the reported yield in any year is less than 75 percent of the 2013-2017 average county yield, then the yield will be substituted with 75 percent of the county average yield.

The chart below provides the ratio obtained by dividing the 2008-2012 average national yield by the 2013-2017 average national yield for each covered commodity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Covered Commodity</th>
<th>National Yield Factor</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barley</td>
<td>0.9437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canola</td>
<td>0.9643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chickpeas, Large</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chickpeas, Small</td>
<td>0.9760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corn</td>
<td>0.9000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crambe</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flaxseed</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grain Sorghum</td>
<td>0.9077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lentils</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mustard Seed</td>
<td>0.9460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oats</td>
<td>0.9524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peanuts</td>
<td>0.9273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peas, Dry</td>
<td>0.9988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapeseed</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice, Long</td>
<td>0.9330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice, Medium</td>
<td>0.9987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice, Temp Japonica</td>
<td>0.9591</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safflower</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seed Cotton</td>
<td>0.9000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sesame Seed</td>
<td>0.9673</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soybeans</td>
<td>0.9000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunflower Seed</td>
<td>0.9396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheat</td>
<td>0.9545</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**It is the owner’s choice whether to update or keep exiting PLC yields.** If a yield update is not made, then no action is required to maintain the existing PLC yield. An existing or updated PLC yield will be maintained and effective for crop years 2020 through 2023 (life of the 2018 Farm Bill).

PLC yields may be updated on a covered commodity-by-covered commodity basis using FSA form **CCC-867**.
Additional Commodities Eligible for Coronavirus Food Assistance Program - Deadline to Apply is August 28

The USDA recently announced an initial list of additional commodities that have been added to the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP), and that the USDA made other adjustments to the program based on comments received from agricultural producers and organizations and review of market data. Producers can now submit applications that include these commodities. FSA continues through Aug. 28, 2020, to accept applications for CFAP, which helps offset price declines and additional marketing costs because of the coronavirus pandemic. USDA expects additional eligible commodities to be announced in the coming weeks.

USDA collected comments and supporting data for consideration of additional commodities through June 22, 2020. Changes to CFAP include:

- Adding the following commodities: alfalfa sprouts, anise, arugula, basil, bean sprouts, beets, blackberries, Brussels sprouts, celeriac (celery root), chives, cilantro, coconuts, collard greens, dandelion greens, greens (others not listed separately), guava, kale greens, lettuce – including Boston, green leaf, Lolla Rossa, oak leaf green, oak leaf red and red leaf – marjoram, mint, mustard, okra, oregano, parsnips, passion fruit, peas (green), pineapple, pistachios, radicchio, rosemary, sage, savory, sorrel, fresh sugarcane, Swiss chard, thyme and turnip top greens.

- Expanding for seven currently eligible commodities – apples, blueberries, garlic, potatoes, raspberries, tangerines and taro – CARES Act funding for sales losses because USDA found these commodities had a 5 percent or greater price decline between mid-January and mid-April as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Originally, these commodities were only eligible for marketing adjustments.

- Determining that peaches and rhubarb no longer qualify for payment under the CARES Act sales loss category.

- Correcting payment rates for apples, artichokes, asparagus, blueberries, cantaloupes, cucumbers, garlic, kiwifruit, mushrooms, papaya, peaches, potatoes, raspberries, rhubarb, tangerines and taro.

Additional details can be found in the Federal Register in the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) and Final Rule Correction and at www.farmers.gov/cfap.

Producers have several options for applying to the CFAP program:

- Using an online portal, accessible at farmers.gov/cfap, allows producers with secure USDA login credentials—known as eAuthentication—to certify eligible commodities online, digitally sign applications and submit directly to their FSA County office.

- Completing the application form using our CFAP Application Generator and Payment Calculator found at farmers.gov/cfap. This Excel workbook allows customers to input information specific to their operation to determine estimated payments and populate the application form, which can be printed, then signed and submitted to their FSA County office. An updated version with the new commodities is available on the CFAP website.
• Downloading the AD-3114 application form from farmers.gov/cfap and manually completing the form to submit to the local USDA Service Center by mail, electronically or by hand delivery to an office drop box. In some limited cases, the office may be open for in-person business by appointment.

Our FSA County office staff can also work with producers to complete and securely transmit digitally signed applications through two commercially available tools: Box and OneSpan. Producers who are interested in digitally signing their applications should notify their local service centers when calling to discuss the CFAP application process. You can learn more about these solutions at farmers.gov/mydocs.

Getting Help from FSA

New customers seeking one-on-one support with the CFAP application process can call 877-508-8364 to speak directly with a USDA employee ready to offer general assistance. This is a recommended first step before a producer engages the staff at their FSA county office.

All other eligibility forms, such as those related to adjusted gross income and payment information, can be downloaded from farmers.gov/cfap. For existing FSA customers, these documents are likely already on file.

FSA Offices Still Accepting WHIP+ Crop Disaster Program Applications for 2018, 2019 Losses

The application period remains open for the Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program-Plus (WHIP+), which is available to agriculture producers affected by natural disasters in 2018 and 2019. Producers are reminded that late in 2019 excessive moisture was added as a qualifying disaster event under the program. An application deadline has not yet been established.

WHIP+, is available to producers who have must have suffered losses of certain crops, trees, bushes or vines in counties with a Presidential Emergency Disaster Declaration or a Secretarial Disaster Designation (primary counties only) for qualifying natural disaster events that occurred in calendar years 2018 or 2019. Also, losses located in a county not designated by the Secretary as a primary county may be eligible if a producer provides documentation showing that the loss was due to a qualifying natural disaster event.

In addition to the recently added eligible losses of excess moisture, FSA will implement a WHIP+ provision for crop quality loss that resulted in price deductions or penalties when marketing crops damaged by eligible disaster events. To ensure an effective program for all impacted farmers, the Agency is currently gathering information on the extent of quality loss from producers and stakeholder organizations.

More information on WHIP+ can be found at farmers.gov/whip-plus.

RMA Extends Deadlines, Defers Interest Accrual Due to COVID-19

The USDA Risk Management Agency (RMA) recently announced it will authorize Approved Insurance Providers (AIPs) to extend deadlines for premium and administrative fee payments, defer the resulting interest accrual and allow other flexibilities to help farmers, and insurance providers due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
USDA recognizes farmers have been severely affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic this year and to help ease the burden on these folks, we are continuing to extend flexibility for producers. The flexibilities support health and safety while also ensuring the Federal crop insurance program continues to serve as a vital risk management tool.

**Background:**

Specifically, USDA is authorizing AIPs to provide policyholders additional time to pay premium and administrative fees and to waive accrual of interest to the earlier of 60 days after their scheduled payment due date or the termination date on policies with premium billing dates between August 1, 2020, and September 30, 2020. In addition, USDA is authorizing AIPs to provide up to an additional 60 days for policyholders to make payment and waive additional interest for Written Payment Agreements due between August 1, 2020, and September 30, 2020.

RMA is authorizing additional flexibilities due to coronavirus while continuing to support producers, working through AIPs to deliver services, including processing policies, claims and agreements. RMA staff are working with AIPs and other customers by phone, mail and electronically to continue supporting crop insurance coverage for producers. Farmers with crop insurance questions or needs should continue to contact their insurance agents about conducting business remotely (by telephone or email). More information can be found at [www.farmers.gov/coronavirus](http://www.farmers.gov/coronavirus).

Crop insurance is sold and delivered solely through private insurance agents. A list of insurance agents is available online using the RMA Agent Locator. Learn more about crop insurance and the modern farm safety net at [www.rma.usda.gov](http://www.rma.usda.gov).

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

The USDA 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: [www.farmers.gov/survey](http://www.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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**August 2020 Loan and Interest Rates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loan Type</th>
<th>Interest Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farm Operating Loans, Direct</td>
<td>1.375%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm Ownership Loans, Direct</td>
<td>2.375%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited Resource Loans</td>
<td>5.000%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm Ownership Loans, Down Payment</td>
<td>1.500%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Loans</td>
<td>2.375%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm Storage Facility Loan, 3 year</td>
<td>0.250%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Farm Storage Facility Loan, 5 year -- 0.250%
Farm Storage Facility Loan, 7 year -- 0.500%
Farm Storage Facility Loan, 10 year -- 0.625%
Farm Storage Facility Loan, 12 year -- 0.750%
Sugar Storage Facility Loans, 15 year -- 0.875%
Commodity Loans -- 1.125%

**Dates to Remember**

**Aug. 21** --- **Deadline** to enroll for CLEAR 30 and CRP Re-enrollments.

**Aug. 28** --- **Deadline** to submit application for Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP).

**Aug. 31** --- **Deadline** to obtain 2020 NAP coverage for Aquaculture, Christmas trees, Floriculture, Ginseng, Mushrooms, Turf grass Sod and Watercress.

**Sept. 7** ---- Labor Day Holiday. **FSA Offices Closed.**

**Sept. 30** -- **Deadline** to Update PLC Yields.

**Sept. 30** -- **Deadline** to obtain 2021 NAP coverage for Winter Wheat, Rye, Barley and Speltz.

**Oct. 12** ---- Columbus Day Holiday. **FSA Offices Closed.**


**Nov. 2** ----- County committee ballots mailed to voters.

**Nov. 11** ---- Veterans Day Holiday. **FSA Offices Closed.**

**Nov. 20** ---- **Last day to apply** for coverage for asparagus, blueberries, caneberries, cherries, chestnuts, forage for hay and pasture, grapes, nectarines, peaches, pears, plums, strawberries, honey, hops and maple syrup.

**Nov. 26** --- Thanksgiving Day Holiday. **FSA Offices Closed.**

**Dec. 7** ----- **Last day** to return voted Ballots in county committee election

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).