November 13, 2020

Ohio FSA State Newsletter

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Message from the FSA State Executive Director

As you wrap up the crop production season and start preparations for winter, please be alert to FSA program application opportunities and deadlines. We’ve had several new program application windows open, while there are several that are closing in the very near future. Check out the calendar below and then contact your FSA County office as soon as possible if any of the programs apply to you.
For those of you who have fall-seeded crops, please don’t forget about acreage certification, for which the **deadline is December 15**. Acreage certification is a requirement in order to maintain eligibility for safety net programs, such as the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs.

FSA mailed out ballots November 2, for the upcoming 2020 election for County FSA Committees. Every FSA county office has an FSA County Committee elected by local producers. The counties each are divided into Local Administrative Areas (LAAs), and each year one or more of a county's LAAs are up for election. Producers who live in an LAA that is up for election should receive a ballot in the mail in early November. Please take the time to **return your ballot by the December 7 deadline**. These committee members are critical to the day-to-day operations of your local FSA office and you get to have a say in who serves on your committee through the election process.

Producers can now make elections and enroll in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for the 2021 crop year, as signup for the 2021 crop year opened Tuesday, October 13. If you already know into which program you would like to enroll your farm(s), please make an appointment to complete the paperwork.

If you would like to learn more about the ARC and PLC programs, then join me along with Ben Brown and others from The Ohio State Extension Service and Ohio FSA as we co-host a Free Statewide **ARC/PLC Webinar on December 1, from 10:00 am - 11:00 am EST**. We will discuss ARC/PLC enrollment and election, market outlook and economic conditions, program eligibility, payment limitations and deadlines, along with answering producer questions. Additional program details and information is provided in our newsletter.

Please remember the deadline to apply for **CFAP 2 is December 11, 2020**. I would also add that a new tool **CFAP 2 Eligible Commodities Finder** is available to make finding payment rates specific to your operation fast, simple, and easy. This is a good tool to quickly determine your payments amounts. CFAP 2 is a separate program from the first round of the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program, now referred to as CFAP 1. Farmers and producers who participated in CFAP 1 will not be automatically enrolled and must complete a new application for CFAP 2.

While it might seem early to some, I know there are producers already thinking about the 2021 production season, and their financing needs for it. FSA offers direct operating and ownership loans as well as guaranteed loans in partnership with your local lender. If you are struggling to access commercial credit, a loan through FSA might be the right fit for your operation. Contact your FSA farm loan team to begin the conversation.

I want to note our FSA offices across the state remain open for business, as we have throughout the global pandemic response. Our staff continues to work hard to deliver programs to you, our customers, using a variety of tools, including phone, email, virtual online appointments, and outside office drop boxes. Please consider conducting business virtually with your FSA County office.
our staff about using “Box and OneSpan” which is a new online tool that provides a secure, cloud-based site where confidential FSA documents can be managed, shared and signed without visiting your county office. In just a few clicks, producers can efficiently conduct business without needing to interrupt the productivity of their workday. Many of our offices have been able to do in-office in-person by-appointment-only appointments. Customers who choose this option for service are required to wear a facing covering (as are our employees) during their appointment and are asked to help maintain appropriate social distancing.

Lastly, 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 can 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

FSA Encourages Farmers to Vote in County Committee Elections

The 2020 FSA County Committee Elections began on Nov. 2, when ballots were mailed to eligible voters. The deadline to return the ballots to local FSA offices, or to be postmarked, is Dec. 7, 2020.

County committee members are an important component of the operations of FSA and provide a link between the agricultural community and USDA. Farmers elected to county committees help deliver FSA programs at the local level, applying their knowledge and judgment to make decisions on commodity price support programs; conservation programs; incentive indemnity and disaster programs for some commodities; emergency programs and eligibility. FSA committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws.

To be an eligible voter, farmers must participate or cooperate in an FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age but supervises and conducts the farming operations of an entire farm, may also be eligible to vote.

Eligible voters in their local administrative area who do not receive a ballot can obtain one from their local USDA Service Center. Newly elected committee members will take office Jan. 1, 2021.

More information on county committees, such as the new 2020 fact sheet, can be found on the FSA website at fsa.usda.gov/elections or at your FSA County Office.
FSA Reminds Producers of Approaching NAP Deadlines for 2021 Crops

FSA reminds producers who are interested in the 2021 Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), of the need to apply for coverage by the following crop deadline dates.

- **November 20, 2020** is the deadline for 2021 NAP coverage on apples, asparagus, blueberries, caneberries, cherries, chestnuts, forage for hay and pasture, grapes, nectarines, peaches, pears, plums, strawberries, honey, maple sap and hops. NOTE: Hops is a perennial crop and the application deadline moved from spring to fall for coverage.
- **March 15, 2021** is the deadline for 2021 NAP coverage on forage sorghum, oats, potatoes, Soybeans, Sunflowers and all spring planted specialty crops grown for food.

**NAP Buy-Up Coverage Option**

NAP offers 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**

Qualified veteran farmers or ranchers are 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."

To help producers learn more about the NAP program and how it can help them, USDA, offers an online Web tool at [www.fsa.usda.gov/nap](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/nap). The webtool allows producers to determine whether their crops are eligible for coverage and gives producers an opportunity to explore a variety of options and levels to determine the best protection level for their operation.

For more information on NAP coverage or obtain coverage, please contact your FSA County office.

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**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, Oct. 13. These key U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) safety-net programs help producers weather fluctuations 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 a covered commodity falls below its reference price.

Covered commodities include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, 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 (signed 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 from the prior crop year.

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.

2019 Crop Year ARC and PLC Payments
FSA began processing payments for 2019 ARC-County (ARC-CO) and PLC on covered commodities that met payment triggers on farms enrolled 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 PLC and ARC-CO payments for which rates have not yet been published.

Producers who had 2019 covered commodities enrolled in ARC-CO 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.

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.
More Information
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](#).

For additional questions and assistance, contact your [FSA County office](#).

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**Understanding FSA’s 2021 ARC/PLC Election and Enrollment Sign-up Options – Webinar – December 1**

Producers can now make elections and enroll in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for the 2021 crop year. Producers can elect coverage and enroll in crop-by-crop ARC-County or PLC, or ARC-Individual for the entire farm. Although election changes for 2021 are optional, enrollment (signed contract) is required for each year of the program.

Join The Ohio State University Extension Service and the USDA Ohio Farm Service Agency as we co-host a Statewide Webinar to discuss ARC/PLC enrollment and election options, market outlook and economic conditions, program eligibility, payment limitations and deadlines. All producers are invited to register and attend this [free webinar](#) on Tuesday, December 1, 2020 from 10:00 am – 11:00 am EDT.

To ensure your question is addressed during the webinar, please send questions to Ben Brown at brown.6888@osu.edu or 660-492-7574 prior to December 1, 2020.

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**Apply Now for USDA’s Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2 - Application Deadline is December 11**

The USDA FSA reminds farmers that the deadline to apply for the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2 (CFAP 2) is Dec. 11, 2020. This program provides direct relief to producers who continue to face market disruptions and associated costs because of COVID-19.

CFAP 2 will provide up to $14 billion to eligible producers of certain row crops, livestock, dairy, specialty crops, aquaculture and more. All eligible commodities, payment rates and calculations can be found on [farmers.gov/cfap](#). CFAP 2 is a separate program from the first iteration of the program (CFAP 1) and interested producers must complete a new application to be eligible for payment for CFAP 2.

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 general assistance. This is a recommended first step before a producer engages the team at the FSA county office.

**Application Options**
Producers have several options for applying to the CFAP 2 program by the Dec. 11 deadline:

- Using an online portal at [gov/cfap](#). This allows producers with secure USDA login credentials, known as eAuthentication, to certify eligible commodities online, digitally sign applications and submit directly to the local USDA Service Center.
- Completing the application form using our CFAP 2 Application Generator and Payment Calculator found at [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 local USDA Service Center.
• Downloading the AD-3117 application form from [gov/cfap](http://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. Visit [farmers.gov/coronavirus/service-center-status](http://farmers.gov/coronavirus/service-center-status) to check the status of your local office.

USDA Service Centers 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 FSA office when calling to discuss the CFAP 2 application process. You can learn more about these solutions at [farmers.gov/mydocs](http://farmers.gov/mydocs).

Producers of commodities with payments based on acreage will use acreage and yield information provided by FSA through the annual acreage reporting process. Producers have the option to complete their application by working directly with their local FSA office or online through the CFAP 2 Application Portal.

All other eligibility forms, such as those related to adjusted gross income and payment information, can be downloaded from [farmers.gov/cfap/apply](http://farmers.gov/cfap/apply). For existing FSA customers, including those who participated in CFAP 1, these documents are likely already on file.

Both CFAP 1 and CFAP 2 are self-certification programs, which means the applicant certifies the information submitted is correct. FSA will soon begin an important step in the internal controls portion of CFAP 1 by conducting spot checks. Producers have been randomly selected using a statistically sound methodology. These CFAP 1 applicants will be contacted by FSA staff and asked to provide supporting documentation to verify the information certified by the producer on their CFAP 1 application.

**More Information**
To find the latest information on CFAP 2, visit [farmers.gov/cfap](http://farmers.gov/cfap) or call 877-508-8364.

### Dairy Margin Coverage Program Enrollment for 2021 Continues Through December 11

The USDA FSA will continue accepting applications for the **Dairy Margin Coverage** (DMC) for 2021 enrollment through **Dec. 11, 2020**.

DMC is a voluntary risk management program that offers protection to dairy producers when the difference between the all-milk price and the average feed price (the margin) falls below a certain dollar amount selected by the producer. DMC payments triggered for seven months in 2019 and three months so far in 2020. More than 23,000 operations enrolled in DMC in 2019, and more than 13,000 in 2020.

To determine the appropriate level of coverage for a specific dairy operation, producers can utilize the recently updated online dairy decision tool. The [decision tool](http://decision tool) is designed to assist producers with calculating total premium costs and administrative fees associated with participation in DMC. An [informational video](http://informational video) is available, too.

Improvements to the decision tool, made in cooperation with representatives from the University of Minnesota and University of Wisconsin, include historical analysis that illustrates what DMC indemnity payments might have been had the program been available over the previous two decades. The analysis indicates that over the course of time, DMC payments made to producers
exceed premiums paid. These decision tool enhancements provide a more comprehensive decision support experience for producers considering DMC.

In addition to DMC, USDA offers a variety of programs that have helped dairy producers, including insurance, disaster assistance, and conservation programs. Most recently, the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 1 provided $1.75 billion in direct relief to dairy producers who faced price declines and additional marketing costs due to COVID-19 in early 2020. Now, signup is underway for the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2, which provides another round of assistance for dairy producers and many other eligible producers.

For more information, visit farmers.gov DMC webpage, or contact your FSA County office.

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2021 Reporting of Fall Seeded Crops

All producers are reminded that the acreage reporting date for fall seeded crops has changed and the acreage reporting date is Dec. 15, 2020. This applies to all fall seeded crops including fall barley, fall wheat and all other fall-seeded small grains. Please call to schedule an appointment to certify your crops.

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Transitioning Expiring CRP Land to Beginning, Veteran or Underserved Farmers

CRP contract holders are encouraged to transition their Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres to beginning, veteran or socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers through the Transition Incentives Program (TIP). TIP provides annual rental payments to the landowner or operator for up to two additional years after the CRP contract expires.

CRP contract holders no longer need to be a retired or retiring owner or operator to transition their land. TIP participants must agree to sell, have a contract to sell, or agree to lease long term (at least five years) land enrolled in an expiring CRP contract to a beginning, veteran, or socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher who is not a family member.

To be considered eligible, veteran, beginning, or SDA farmers and CRP participants must enroll in TIP during the period beginning 2 years before the CRP contract expiration date and before August 15th of the Fiscal Year that the CRP contract is scheduled to expire. The TIP application must be submitted prior to completing the lease or sale of the affected lands. New landowners or renters that return the land to production must use sustainable grazing or farming methods.

For more information on TIP, contact your FSA County office.

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USDA to Open Signup for the Conservation Reserve Program and CRP Grasslands in Early 2021

USDA recently announced the 2021 signup periods for general Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and CRP Grasslands offers. General signup for CRP will be open from January 4, 2021 to February 12, 2021; signup for CRP Grasslands runs from March 15, 2021 to April 23, 2021. Both programs are competitive and provide annual rental payments for land devoted to conservation purposes.
CRP and the many focused programs that come under it, like CRP Grasslands, are some of the most critical tools to help producers better manage their operations while conserving natural resources. CRP has proven to protect the Nation’s valuable resources. Next year’s signup gives farmers and ranchers an opportunity to enroll in CRP for the first time or continue their participation for another term.

Producers may apply by contacting their FSA County office.

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

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Risk Management Agency (RMA) recently 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 beginning of the 2021 crop year and is based on the coverage selected by the livestock producer. RMA will implement the other improvements later this year.

“We encourage livestock producers to contact their insurance agent to take advantage of these improvements,” said RMA Administrator Martin Barbre. “These changes will not only make LRP more affordable for producers, but also will provide them with better coverage.”

Other improvements to be implemented include:

- Increasing livestock head limits for feeder and fed cattle to 6,000 head per endorsement/12,000 head annually, and swine to 40,000 head per endorsement/150,000 head annually
- Modifying the requirement to own insured livestock until the last 60 days of the endorsement
- Increasing the endorsement lengths for swine up to 52 weeks
- Creating new feeder cattle and swine types to allow for unborn livestock to be insured

For more information on the LRP program, please see the [RMA website](https://www.rma.usda.gov).

RMA is authorizing additional flexibilities due to coronavirus while continuing to support producers, working through Approved Insurance Providers (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 [farmers.gov/coronavirus](https://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](https://www.rma.usda.gov). Learn more about crop insurance and the modern farm safety net at [rma.usda.gov](https://www.rma.usda.gov).
November 2020 Loan and Interest Rates

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<tr>
<td>Farm Ownership Loans, Direct</td>
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<td>Limited Resource Loans</td>
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<td>Farm Ownership Loans, Down Payment</td>
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<td>Emergency Loans</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commodity Loans</td>
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Dates to Remember

**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.

**Dec. 11** ---- Election period **deadline** for 2021 Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) Program.

**Dec. 11** ---- Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2 (CFAP 2) application **deadline**.

**Dec. 15** ---- **Deadline** to report the 2021 Fall Seeded Crops for fall barley, fall wheat and all other fall-seeded small grains.

**Dec. 25** ---- Christmas Day Holiday. **FSA Offices Closed.**

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).