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A Message from the Ohio FSA State Office

Happy New Year!

We have a great deal of activity going on in our county offices, including some program announcements and deadlines of which you should be aware. Below you’ll find articles that highlight some of the key things keeping our offices busy right now. For instance, our staff is accepting election and enrollment applications for 2022 for the Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage (ARC/PLC) commodity crop safety net programs. Our offices are busy accepting elections and enrollments for the Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage commodity crop safety net programs. If you haven’t already scheduled your appointment to start this process, please do so with your County FSA office as soon as possible.

Please take time to read the details on the Organic and Transitional Education and Certification Program (OTECP). Certified and transitional operations may apply for OTECP.
for eligible expenses paid during the 2020, 2021, and 2022 fiscal years. Signup for 2020 and 2021 OTECP began November 8, 2021 and runs through February 4, 2022. Producers are encouraged to contact their County FSA office for more information and to file an application.

On December 8th, USDA announced signup for the Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) program and expanded the program to allow dairy producers to better protect their operations by enrolling supplemental production. Signup runs to February 18, 2022. Dairy producers are encouraged to read the recent news release and to contact their County FSA office for additional details.

The Spot Market Hog Pandemic Program (SMHPP) application deadline is Feb. 25, 2022. This program is designed to assist producers who sold hogs through a negotiated sale from April 16, 2020 to Sept. 1, 2020. This is the time period in which producers faced the greatest reduction in market prices due to the pandemic. If you are a hog producer who sells on the spot market, please contact County FSA office to learn more about this ad-hoc assistance program.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, our Ohio service centers continue to operate with limited visitors, by appointment only. The Omicron variant continues to impact several of our office operations, reducing staffing to 25 percent with no visitors allowed until COVID incident rates decline in those areas. Please call before visiting to find out if your FSA County office is open to limited visitors. If you feel an in-person appointment is needed to conduct your business rather than by phone or online, please reach out to your FSA County office so they can assist in scheduling an appointment. As a reminder, all visitors and staff are required to wear a mask in a federal facility. Our local staff appreciate your efforts to protect them and their families. Your patience is appreciated as we continue to operate under COVID protocol.

Additional program details and more in-depth information is provided in our newsletter.

**Signup Continues for Dairy Margin Coverage, Expands Program for Supplemental Production**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) opened signup for the Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) program and expanded the program to allow dairy producers to better protect their operations by enrolling supplemental production. This signup period – which runs to Feb. 18, 2022 – enables producers to get coverage through this important safety-net program for another year as well as get additional assistance through the new Supplemental DMC.

Supplemental DMC will provide $580 million to better help small- and mid-sized dairy operations that have increased production over the years but were not able to enroll the additional production. Now, they will be able to retroactively receive payments for that supplemental production. Additionally, USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) updated how feed costs are calculated, which will make the program more reflective of actual dairy producer expenses.

**Supplemental DMC Enrollment**

Eligible dairy operations with less than 5 million pounds of established production history may enroll supplemental pounds based upon a formula using 2019 actual milk marketings, which
will result in additional payments. Producers will be required to provide FSA with their 2019 Milk Marketing Statement.

Supplemental DMC coverage is applicable to calendar years 2021, 2022 and 2023. Participating dairy operations with supplemental production may receive retroactive supplemental payments for 2021 in addition to payments based on their established production history.

Supplemental DMC will require a revision to a producer’s 2021 DMC contract and must occur before enrollment in DMC for the 2022 program year. Producers will be able to revise 2021 DMC contracts and then apply for 2022 DMC by contacting their [County FSA Office](#).

**DMC 2022 Enrollment**

After making any revisions to 2021 DMC contracts for Supplemental DMC, producers can sign up for 2022 coverage. DMC provides eligible dairy producers with risk management coverage that pays producers when the difference between the price of milk and the cost of feed falls below a certain level. So far in 2021, DMC payments have triggered for January through October for more than $1.0 billion.

For DMC enrollment, producers must certify with FSA that the operation is commercially marketing milk, sign all required forms and pay the $100 administrative fee. The fee is waived for farmers who are considered limited resource, beginning, socially disadvantaged, or a military veteran. To determine the appropriate level of DMC coverage for a specific dairy operation, producers can use the [online dairy decision tool](#).

**Updates to Feed Costs**

USDA is also changing the DMC feed cost formula to better reflect the actual cost dairy farmers pay for high-quality alfalfa hay. FSA will calculate payments using 100% premium alfalfa hay rather than 50%. The amended feed cost formula will make DMC payments more reflective of actual dairy producer expenses.

**Additional Dairy Assistance**

Today’s announcement is part of a broader package to help the dairy industry respond to the pandemic and other challenges. USDA is also amending Dairy Indemnity Payment Program (DIPP) regulations to add provisions for the indemnification of cows that are likely to be not marketable for longer durations, as a result, for example, of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances. FSA also worked closely with USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service to target assistance through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and other conservation programs to help producers safely dispose of and address resource concerns created by affected cows. Other recent dairy announcements include $350 million through the Pandemic Market Volatility Assistance Program and $400 million for the Dairy Donation Program.

Additional details on these changes to DMC and DIPP can be found in a rule that will be published soon in the *Federal Register*. This rule also included information on the new Oriental Fruit Fly Program as well as changes to FSA conservation programs. A copy of the rule is available [here](#).
More Information

To learn more or to participate in DMC or DIPP, producers should contact their County FSA Office.

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**USDA Provides Additional Pandemic Assistance to Hog Producers**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced a new program to assist hog producers who sold hogs through a negotiated sale during the period in which these producers faced the greatest reduction in market prices due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Spot Market Hog Pandemic Program (SMHPP) is part of USDA’s Pandemic Assistance for Producers initiative and addresses gaps in previous assistance for hog producers. USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) will accept applications Dec. 15, 2021 through Feb. 25, 2022.

SMHPP provides assistance to hog producers who sold hogs through a negotiated sale from April 16, 2020 through Sept. 1, 2020. Negotiated sale, or negotiated formula sale, means a sale of hogs by a producer to a packer under which the base price for the hogs is determined by seller-buyer interaction and agreement on a delivery day. USDA is offering SMHPP as packer production was reduced due to the COVID-19 pandemic due to employee illness and supply chain issues, resulting in fewer negotiated hogs being procured and subsequent lower market prices.

The Department has set aside up to $50 million in pandemic assistance funds through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act for SMHPP.

**SMHPP Program Details**

Eligible hogs include hogs sold through a negotiated sale by producers between April 16, 2020, and Sept. 1, 2020. To be eligible, the producer must be a person or legal entity who has ownership in the hogs and whose production facilities are located in the United States, including U.S. territories. Contract producers, federal, state and local governments, including public schools and packers are not eligible for SMHPP.

SMHPP payments will be calculated by multiplying the number of head of eligible hogs, not to exceed 10,000 head, by the payment rate of $54 per head. FSA will issue payments to eligible hog producers as applications are received and approved.

**Applying for Assistance**

Eligible hog producers can apply for SMHPP starting Dec. 15, 2021, by completing the FSA-940, Spot Market Hog Pandemic Program application. Additional documentation may be required. Visit farmers.gov/smhpp for a copy of the Notice of Funds Availability, information on applicant eligibility and more information on how to apply.

For more information about the SMHPP, contact your County FSA office.
Deadline Extended to Apply for Pandemic Support for Certified Organic and Transitioning Operations

The USDA FSA has extended the deadline for agricultural producers who are certified organic, or transitioning to organic, to apply for the Organic and Transitional Education and Certification Program (OTECP). This program provides pandemic assistance to cover certification and education expenses. The deadline to apply for 2020 and 2021 eligible expenses is now Feb. 4, 2022, rather than the original deadline of Jan. 7, 2022.

Certified operations and transitional operations may apply for OTECP for eligible expenses paid during the 2020, 2021 and 2022 fiscal years. Signup for the 2022 fiscal year will be announced at a later date.

For each year, OTECP covers 25% of a certified operation’s eligible certification expenses, up to $250 per certification category (crop, livestock, wild crop, handling and State Organic Program fee). This includes application fees, inspection fees, USDA organic certification costs, state organic program fees and more.

Crop and livestock operations transitioning to organic production may be eligible for 75% of a transitional operation’s eligible expenses, up to $750, for each year. This includes fees charged by a certifying agent or consultant for pre-certification inspections and development of an organic system plan.

For both certified operations and transitional operations, OTECP covers 75% of the registration fees, up to $200, per year, for educational events that include content related to organic production and handling in order to assist operations in increasing their knowledge of production and marketing practices that can improve their operations, increase resilience and expand available marketing opportunities. Additionally, both certified and transitional operations may be eligible for 75% of the expense of soil testing required under the National Organic Program (NOP) to document micronutrient deficiency, not to exceed $100 per year.

Producers apply through their County FSA office and can also obtain one-on-one support with applications by calling 877-508-8364. The program application and additional information can be found at farmers.gov/otecp.

Additional Organic Support

OTECP builds upon USDA’s Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP) which provides cost share assistance of 50%, up to a maximum of $500 per scope, to producers and handlers of agricultural products who are obtaining or renewing their certification under the NOP. Although the application period for OCCSP ended Nov. 1, 2021, FSA will consider late-filed applications for those operations who still wish to apply.

USDA Encourages 2022 ARC and PLC Enrollment

FSA is encouraging producers to contact their local USDA Service Centers to make or change elections and to enroll for 2022 ARC or PLC, providing future protections against market fluctuations. The election and enrollment period opened on Oct. 18, 2021 and runs through March 15, 2022.
Producers can elect coverage and enroll in ARC-CO or PLC, which are both crop-by-crop, or ARC-IC, which is for the entire farm. Although election changes for 2022 are optional, producers must enroll through a signed contract each year. Also, if a producer has a multi-year contract on the farm and makes an election change for 2022, it will be necessary to sign a new contract.

If an election is not submitted by the deadline of March 15, 2022, the election remains the same as the 2021 election for crops on the farm. Farm owners cannot enroll in either program unless they have a share interest in the farm.

Covered commodities include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, safflower seed, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed, and wheat.

**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](#), a tool available through the University of Illinois allows producers to estimate payments for farms and counties for ARC-CO and PLC.
- [ARC and PLC Decision Tool](#), a tool available through Texas A&M tallows producers to estimate payments and yield updates and expected payments for 2022.

**Crop Insurance Considerations**

ARC and PLC are part of a broader safety net provided by USDA, which also includes crop insurance and marketing assistance loans.

Producers are reminded that ARC and PLC elections and enrollments can impact eligibility for some crop insurance products.

Producers on farms with a PLC election have the option of purchasing Supplemental Coverage Option (SCO) through their Approved Insurance Provider; however, producers on farms where ARC is the election are ineligible for SCO on their planted acres for that crop on that farm. Unlike SCO, the Enhanced Coverage Option (ECO) is unaffected by an ARC election. Producers may add ECO regardless of the farm program election.

For more information on ARC and PLC, visit the [ARC and PLC webpage](#) or contact our FSA office.

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**FSA Reminds Producers of Approaching NAP Deadlines for 2022 Crops**

FSA reminds producers who are interested in the 2022 Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), of the need to apply for coverage by the following crop deadline dates.
• **March 15, 2022** is the deadline for 2022 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](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/).  

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**USDA Rural Development Agency Seeks Applicants for the Rural Energy for America Program**

The USDA Rural Development Agency is accepting applications for the Rural Energy For America Program. The next grant application deadline is **March 31, 2022**. This grant application deadline is for projects which request $20,000 or less and for projects which request up to $500,000.

The REAP program is designed to assist rural, small, for-profit businesses and agricultural producers install renewable energy systems or make energy efficiency improvements to their operations. These improvements can help eligible applicants control energy costs and improve the overall profitability of their operations. The grant program can cover up to 25% of
the eligible project costs while the loan guarantee can cover up to 75% of the eligible project costs. Federal participation cannot exceed 75% of eligible project costs.

Grants can range from $1,500 to $500,000 with loan guarantees up to $25,000,000.

This program has helped farmers replace grain dryers; replace fans and lights for livestock operations; and install solar PV arrays to help offset electrical consumption. Small businesses have benefited through the replacement of lighting with high efficiency LED lighting; improvements to HVAC systems; and the installation of a renewable energy system to help offset electrical consumption.

Additional information can be found at: Rural Energy for America Program.

Should you be interested in discussing a specific project or in receiving an application for your project, please contact one of the USDA Ohio Rural Development Specialists listed below:

- Danielle Fry, Business Program Specialist, frye@usda.gov
- Ann Stahl, Business Program Specialist, stahl@usda.gov
- Jennifer Brown, Business Program Specialist, brown@usda.gov
- Marcy Lucas, Business Program Specialist, lucas@usda.gov
- Evan Kohler, Business Program Specialist, kohler@usda.gov

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**USDA Announces Details of New Insurance Option for Conservation-Minded Corn Farmers**

Corn farmers who “split-apply” nitrogen now have another option for insurance coverage. The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Risk Management Agency (RMA) today announced the details of its Post Application Coverage Endorsement (PACE) in certain states for non-irrigated corn, providing coverage for producers who use this practice that saves producers money and is considered better for natural resources.

“We are proud to offer this new insurance option that encourages the use of conservation practices that benefit not just the environment, but also producers' balance sheets,” said RMA Administrator Marcia Bunger. “America’s agricultural communities are on the frontlines crafting solutions to address climate change and improve the environment. Across USDA, we’re adapting our programs to meet the needs of producers as well as the challenges they face.”

PACE provides payments for the projected yield lost when producers are unable to apply the post nitrogen application during the V3-V10 corn growth stages due to field conditions created by weather. PACE is offered in select counties in 11 states, including Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. It is available as supplemental coverage for Yield Protection (YP), Revenue Protection (RP), and Revenue Protection with Harvest Price Exclusion (RP-HPE) policies. The first sales closing date to purchase insurance is March 15, 2022.

To “split-apply” nitrogen, growers make multiple fertilizer applications during the growing season rather than providing all the crop’s nitrogen requirements with a single treatment...
before or during planting. This practice can lead to lower input costs and helps prevent runoff and leaching of nutrients into waterways and groundwater.

This new crop insurance option builds upon RMA’s efforts to encourage use of conservation practices, including cover crops. For example, RMA recently provided $59.5 million in premium support for producers who planted cover crops on 12.2 million acres through the new Pandemic Cover Crop Program. Additionally, RMA recently updated policy to allow producers with crop insurance to hay, graze or chop cover crops at any time and still receive 100% of the prevented planting payment. This policy change supports use of cover crops, which can help producers build resilience to drought.

More Information

To learn more about PACE, visit the RMA’s Conservation webpage, which has frequently asked questions, a fact sheet and other resources.

RMA staff are working with AIPs and other customers by phone, mail, and electronically to support crop insurance coverage for producers. Farmers with crop insurance questions or needs should contact their insurance agents about conducting business remotely (by telephone or email). More information can be found at farmers.gov/coronavirus.

Crop insurance is sold and delivered solely through private crop insurance agents. A list of crop insurance agents is available at all USDA Service Centers and online at the RMA Agent Locator. Learn more about crop insurance and the modern farm safety net at rma.usda.gov.

Ohio NRCS Announces Conservation Funding Application Deadline: January 14

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is offering a number of conservation opportunities to private landowners through Ohio’s Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Applications for EQIP are taken on a continuous basis, however, interested landowners are encouraged to contact their local NRCS service center prior to the January 14, 2022 signup deadline for fiscal year 2022 funding.

EQIP is a voluntary conservation program which helps producers make conservation work for them. NRCS provides agricultural producers with financial resources and one-on-one help to plan and implement improvements, or what NRCS calls conservation practices. Using these practices can lead to cleaner water and air, healthier soil and better wildlife habitat. Together, NRCS and producers invest in solutions that conserve natural resources for the future while also improving agricultural operations.

Financial assistance is now available through a number of categories. Visit Ohio NRCS website under “EQIP Funding Categories” for more details. To learn more about EQIP or other technical and financial assistance available through NRCS conservation programs, visit Get Started with NRCS or contact your local USDA Service Center. Click here to read the full news release.
Ohio NRCS Working with Partners to Improve Water Quality, Natural Resources, While Supporting State's Producers: January 14 Deadline

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced a national investment of $330 million in 85 locally driven, public-private partnerships to address climate change, improve the nation’s water quality, combat drought, enhance soil health, support wildlife habitat and protect agricultural viability.

Producers are encouraged to apply for RCPP project funding at their local NRCS office. Applications are taken on a continuous basis, however, interested parties are encouraged to contact their local NRCS service center prior to the January 14, 2022 signup deadline for fiscal year 2022 funding.

RCPP is a voluntary conservation program which helps producers make conservation work for them. NRCS provides agricultural producers with financial resources and one-on-one help to plan and implement improvements, or what NRCS calls conservation practices.

Producers must meet project eligibility requirements, including location. Visit Ohio NRCS website under “EQIP Funding Categories” for more details on the different RCPP projects. To learn more about EQIP or other technical and financial assistance available through NRCS conservation programs, visit Get Started with NRCS or contact your local USDA Service Center.

Through conservation practices and partnerships, including those through RCPP, USDA aims to enhance economic growth and create new streams of income for farmers, ranchers, producers and private foresters. Successfully meeting these challenges will require USDA and our agencies to pursue a coordinated approach alongside USDA stakeholders, including state, local and Tribal governments. Click here to read the full news release.

Dates to Remember

Jan. 15 ---- Deadline to report apples and grapes to FSA.

Jan. 17 ---- Martin Luther King Jr. Day Holiday. The USDA Service Centers are Closed.

Jan. 31 ---- Deadline on 2021 LDPs for wool and unshorn lamb pelts.

Jan. 31 ---- 2021 Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) including water hauling and hay/feed transportation. Application for Payment Deadline for timely filed 2021 ELAP notices of losses.

Jan. 31 ---- Deadline for the 2021 Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) Application and all supporting documentation.

Feb. 4 ------ FSA application deadline for Organic and Transitional Education and Certification Program (OTECP).
Feb. 18 ----- Final date to enroll for 2022 Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) and Supplemental Dairy Margin Coverage (SDMC) as the program ends.

Feb. 21 ----- President's Day Holiday. The USDA Service Centers are Closed.

Mar. 1 ------ Primary Nesting Season begins.

Mar. 1 ------ **Deadline** for the 2021 Livestock Indemnity Program Application for Payment and all supporting documentation for timely filed 2021 LIP notices of livestock losses.

Mar. 15 ---- Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) election and enrollment application **deadline** for 2022 crop season.

Mar. 15 ---- **Deadline** to obtain 2022 NAP coverage on spring planted crops.

Mar. 15 ---- **Deadline** to purchase NAP coverage for hemp. NAP will be available for 2022 to provide insurance-type coverage due to adverse weather conditions. NAP provides coverage against loss for hemp grown for fiber, grain, seed, or cannabidiol (CBD) for the 2022 crop year where no permanent federal crop insurance program is available.

Mar. 31 ---- **Final Availability** for 2021 crop wheat, barley, oats, honey loans and LDPs.

**Ongoing**

Reports of Failed Acreage must be filed with the County Office before disposition of the crop.

Reports of Prevented Planting Acreage must be filed with the County Office no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date for that county and producers of hand-harvested crops and certain perishable crops must notify FSA within 72 hours of when a loss becomes apparent.

Contact FSA right away for notice of loss deadlines and disaster program requirements.

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**January 2022 Loan and Interest Rates**

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<td>Commodity Loans</td>
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Acting State Executive Director: Glenda Ward
Conservation Chief: Brandi Koehler
Price Support Chief: Vacant

Administrative Officer: Traci Garza
Farm Loan Chief: Darren Metzger
Production Adjustment / Compliance and Risk Management Chief: Matt Kleski

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