Greetings!

Summer is winding down and this fall looks a bit different than those before, as we continue to adjust to life during the pandemic. As Oklahomans, we continue to persevere in these challenging times to get things done in the field, at work and at home. Your local FSA staff is busy working to meet your needs, as well.

A few deadlines that I wanted to bring to your attention:

**August 15**: Acreage reporting deadline (extended from July 15, due to COVID-19) for alfalfa, perennial forage, soybeans, corn and other spring-planted feed grains, CRP, all other summer crops.
Karen Eifert Jones, Waukomis
Don Allen Parsons, Idabel
J.B. Stewart, Keyes
David Bush, Altus

State Staff:

Phil Estes
Farm Loan Programs

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Eligibility

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Conservation

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Compliance & Price Support

Janlyn Hannah
Administration &
Public Relations/Outreach

Please contact your local FSA
Office for questions specific to
your operation or county. FSA
Office contact information can
be located on our online
Directory

August 28: Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) signup ends

August 31: Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) Coverage Purchase Deadline for alfalfa, aquaculture, canola, Christmas trees, turfgrass sod, cool season grass intended for fall or next spring early grazing, all small grain crops for grazing or hay

Please call your local office to set up an appointment to complete your applications. Have a safe and productive month!

Sincerely,
Scott Biggs Oklahoma State Executive Director

USDA Investigates Packages of Unsolicited Seeds from China

USDA is aware that people across the country have received suspicious, unsolicited packages of seed that appear to be coming from China. USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is working closely with the Department of Homeland Security’s Customs and Border Protection, other federal agencies, and State departments of agriculture to investigate the situation.

USDA urges anyone who receives an unsolicited package of seeds to immediately contact their State plant regulatory official or APHIS State plant health director. Please hold onto the seeds and packaging, including the mailing label, until someone from your State department of agriculture or APHIS contacts you with further instructions. Do not plant seeds from unknown origins.

At this time, we don’t have any evidence indicating this is something other than a “brushing scam” where people receive unsolicited items from a seller who then posts false customer reviews to boost sales. USDA is currently collecting seed packages from recipients and will test their contents and determine if they contain anything that could be of concern to U.S. agriculture or the environment.

USDA is committed to preventing the unlawful entry of prohibited seeds and protecting U.S. agriculture from invasive pests and noxious weeds. Visit the APHIS website to learn more about USDA’s efforts to stop agricultural smuggling and promote trade compliance.
USDA Launched New Farmers.gov Features to Help Farmers Hire Workers

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced new features on the farmers.gov website designed to help facilitate the employment of H-2A workers.

USDA’s goal is to help farmers navigate the complex H-2A program that is administered by Department of Labor, Department of Homeland Security, and the State Department so hiring a farm worker is an easier process.

The primary new H-2A features on Farmers.gov include:

- A real-time dashboard that enables farmers to track the status of their eligible employer application and visa applications for temporary nonimmigrant workers;
- Streamlining the login information so if a farmer has an existing login.gov account they can save multiple applications tracking numbers for quick look-up at any time;
- Enables easy access to the Department of Labor’s (DOL) Foreign Labor Application Gateway (FLAG);
- Allows farmers to track time-sensitive actions taken in the course of Office of Foreign Labor Certification’s (OFLC) adjudication of temporary labor certification applications;
- Allowing for farmers to access all application forms on-line.

All information can be found at www.farmers.gov/manage/h2a.

In 2018, Secretary Perdue unveiled farmers.gov, a dynamic, mobile-friendly public website combined with an authenticated portal where customers can apply for programs, process transactions and manage accounts. With feedback from customers and field employees who serve those customers, farmers.gov delivers farmer-focused features through an agile, iterative process to deliver the greatest immediate value to America’s agricultural producers – helping farmers and ranchers do right, and feed everyone.

Additional Commodities Eligible for Coronavirus Food Assistance Program

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue announced an initial list of additional commodities that have been added to the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP), and that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) made other adjustments to the program based on comments received from agricultural producers and organizations and review of market data. Producers will be able to submit applications that include these commodities on Monday, July 13, 2020. USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) is accepting through Aug. 28, 2020, 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:

1. 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 the local USDA Service Center. New commodities will be available in the system on July 13, 2020.

2. 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 local USDA Service Center. An updated version with the new commodities will be available on the website on July 13, 2020.

3. 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. Visit 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 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 team at the FSA county office at their local USDA Service Center.
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.

### 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>
</tr>
</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>
</tbody>
</table>
Rice, Medium 0.9887
Rice, Temp Japonica 0.9591
Safflower 1.0000
Seed Cotton 0.9000
Sesame Seed 0.9673
Soybeans 0.9000
Sunflower Seed 0.9396
Wheat 0.9545

It is the owner’s choice whether to update or keep existing 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.

For more information, reference resources and decision tools, visit farmers.gov/arc-plc. Contact your local Farm Service Agency Office for assistance – farmers.gov/service-center-locator.

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**USDA Announces Flexibilities for Producers Filing ‘Notice of Loss’ for Failed, Prevented Planted Acres**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is providing additional flexibilities for producers to file on acres with failed crops or crops that were prevented from planting because of extreme weather events. USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) is adding these flexibilities for Notice of Loss on both insured and uninsured crops to enable Service Centers to best assist producers.

**Filing for Prevented Planted Acres**

For insured crops, producers who timely filed a prevented planted claim with the reinsurance company but filed a Notice of Loss (CCC-576) form after the deadline will be considered timely filed for FSA purposes. FSA can use data from the Risk Management Agency (RMA) for accepting the report of prevented planting with FSA. If the information is not available through RMA, the producer may also provide proper evidence to FSA that the prevented planted claim was timely filed with the reinsurance company.

For uninsured crops, producers may start a Notice of Loss (CCC-576) by calling their FSA county office, or they may print and complete the Notice of Loss (CCC-576) form from home and send to their county office. For prevented planted acreage, Notice of Loss forms mailed to the FSA office must be postmarked by the final acreage reporting date in the county to be considered timely filed. For all prevented planted cases, the Report of Acreage (FSA-578) form and the completed and signed Notice of Loss (CCC-576) must be filed by the applicable acreage reporting date.
Filing for Failed Acres

For failed acreage of uninsured crops, the Notice of Loss (CCC-576) must be completed, signed and verified before the disposition of the crop.

When to File a ‘Notice of Loss’

A Notice of Loss cannot be filed for a crop before the final planting date, but it can be filed before completing the crop acreage report.

More Information

Producers who miss FSA’s July 15 acreage reporting deadline will not face a late filing fee if filed within a month of the deadline.

For questions, please contact your FSA county office. To locate your FSA county office at your Service Center, visit farmers.gov/service-center-locator.

FSA Reminds Producers of Ongoing Disaster Assistance Program Signup

USDA has started making payments through the Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program – Plus (WHIP+) to agricultural producers who suffered eligible losses because of drought or excess moisture in 2018 and 2019. Signup for these causes of loss opened March 23, and producers who suffered losses from drought (in counties designated D3 or above), excess moisture, hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, typhoons, volcanic activity, snowstorms or wildfires can still apply for assistance through WHIP+.

To be eligible for WHIP+, producers 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.

For losses due to drought, a producer is eligible if any area of the county in which the loss occurred was rated D3, or extreme drought, or higher on the U.S. Drought Monitor during calendar years 2018 or 2019. Producers who suffered losses should contact their FSA county office.

In addition to the recently added eligible losses of drought and excess moisture, FSA will implement a WHIP+ provision for crop quality loss that resulted in price deductions or penalties when marketing crops were 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.

USDA Service Centers, including FSA county offices, are open for business by phone only, and field work will continue with appropriate social distancing. While program delivery staff will continue to come into the office, they will be working with producers by phone and using online tools whenever possible. All Service Center visitors wishing to conduct business with the FSA, Natural Resources Conservation Service or any other Service Center agency are required to call their
Service Center to schedule a phone appointment. More information on Service Centers can be found at farmers.gov/coronavirus, and more information on WHIP+ can be found at farmers.gov/whip-plus.

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

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

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

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

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

The Farm Loan Discovery Tool is one of many resources on farmers.gov to help connect farmers to information that can help their operations. Earlier this year, USDA launched the My 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 for farmers, by farmers. In addition to the interactive farm loan features, the site also offers a Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool. Farmers can visit farmers.gov/recover/disaster-assistance-tool#step-1 to find disaster assistance programs that can help their operation recover from natural disasters.
Reminders for FSA Direct and Guaranteed Borrowers with Real Estate Security

Farm loan borrowers who have pledged real estate as security for their Farm Service Agency (FSA) direct or guaranteed loans are responsible for maintaining loan collateral. Borrowers must obtain prior consent or approval from FSA or the guaranteed lender for any transaction that affects real estate security. These transactions include, but are not limited to:

- Leases of any kind
- Easements of any kind
- Subordinations
- Partial releases
- Sales

Failure to meet or follow the requirements in the loan agreement, promissory note, and other security instruments could lead to nonmonetary default which could jeopardize your current and future loans.

It is critical that borrowers keep an open line of communication with their FSA loan staff or guaranteed lender when it comes to changes in their operation. For more information on borrower responsibilities, read Your FSA Farm Loan Compass.

USDA Accepting Proposals for State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement Initiative

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is now accepting new or modified proposals from state governments for its State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) Initiative. Through SAFE, vital habitat is restored to meet high-priority state wildlife conservation goals. The deadline to submit proposals is June 19.

SAFE practices must be used to restore animal habitats for the following categories:

- rare, threatened and endangered species
- species that have suffered a significant population decline
- species that provide significant social or economic value to the community.

SAFE grass and tree practices were moved to the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) General Signup in 2019 and competed against other offers, while buffer and wetland practices remain under continuous CRP signup.

When submitted, proposals must include an overview of the project accomplishments, a list of all practices planned, the commitment of the state and participants and the planned outreach efforts.

For more information about SAFE and submitting a proposal, contact your FSA state office at 405-742-1130.