



April 2021

Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

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Oregon FSA Newsletter

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USDA Announces Pandemic Assistance for Producers

On March 24, USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack announced the new initiative, USDA Pandemic Assistance for Producers that will bring new programs and efforts for further financial assistance to farmers, ranchers and producers who felt the impact of COVID-19 market disruptions. Further information is provided at <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/state-offices/Oregon/index>.

USDA also recently announced the availability of a new webpage at farmers.gov/American Rescure Plan that provides information on the debt payments and [frequently asked questions](#).

The Farm Service Agency is currently accepting proposals for Cooperative Agreement No.USDA-FSA-MULTI-21-NOFO0001104 to establish partnerships with organizations to provide outreach and technical assistance to socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers. Proposals are due May 5, 2021. View the Cooperative Agreement opportunity on grants.gov.

Farm Loan Programs:
Kathy Brucker, Chief

State Committee:
Anna Sullivan, Chair
TJ Hansell, Member
Sam Asai, Member
Phil Hassinger, Member
Denver Pugh, Member

Next STC Meeting: June 16

Sign up for important text message alerts from your local county FSA office! To subscribe, text FSANOW (372-669).

How can we help you?
Submit questions or requests for further information to [ASK.USDA.GOV](https://ask.usda.gov) or 1-833-ONE-USDA

Please Note: USDA Service Center staff continue to work with agricultural producers via phone, email, and other digital tools. Because of the pandemic, some USDA Service Centers are open to limited visitors. Contact your Service Center to set up an in-person or phone appointment. Additionally, more information related to USDA's response and relief for producers can be found at farmers.gov/coronavirus.

Interest Rates

Farm Operating Loans - Direct: 1.500%
Farm Operating - Microloan: 1.500%
Farm Ownership Loans-Direct: 2.875%
Farm Ownership - Microloan: 2.875%
Farm Ownership - Direct, Joint Financing: 2.500%
Farm Ownership-Down Payment: 1.500%
Emergency Loans Actual Loss: 2.500%
Farm Storage Facility Loan 3 Year: 0.250%
Farm Storage Facility Loan 5 Year: 0.750%
Farm Storage Facility Loan 7 Year: 1.250%
Farm Storage Facility Loan 10 Year: 1.500%
Farm Storage Facility Loan 12 Year: 1.750%

Important Dates

- [CRP General Signup](#) continues, extended signup deadline TBD.
 - **2021** CRP Non-Emergency Grazing Period (prior approval required)
 - **April 5:** [CFAP-2](#) Additional Enrollment Opened
 - **April 23:** [CRP Grasslands](#) Signup 203 Closes
 - **May 5:** [Cooperative Agreement No. USDA-FSA-MULTI-21-NOFO0001104](#) Proposals due
 - **May 31:** [Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program \(NAP\)](#) Ornamental Nurseries Only
 - **May 31:** Memorial Day Federal Holiday-Offices Closed
 - **Sept. 30:** Continuous and CREP Signup 55 Closes
- [Click here to learn more about local deadlines and ongoing programs.](#)

FSA Opens CFAP 2 Signup for Additional Enrollment; Updates Additional CFAP Provisions

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced that signup has reopened for the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2 (CFAP 2) as part of the Pandemic Assistance for Producers initiative. The initial CFAP 2 signup ended on Dec. 11, 2020, but USDA has reopened sign-up for CFAP 2 for at least 60 days beginning April 5, 2021, for producers to apply or make modifications to existing CFAP 2 applications.

CFAP 2 provides direct financial relief to producers due to market disruptions and associated costs because of COVID-19. CFAP 2 payments will be made for three categories of commodities – Price Trigger Commodities, Flat-rate Crops and Sales Commodities. Visit farmers.gov/cfap/commodities for a full list of eligible commodities for each category.

Price Trigger Commodities Price trigger commodities are major commodities that meet a minimum 5-percent price decline over a specified period of time. Eligible price trigger crops include

barley, corn, sorghum, soybeans, sunflowers, upland cotton, and all classes of wheat. Payments will be based on 2020 planted acres of the crop, excluding prevented planting and experimental acres.

For broilers and eggs, payments will be based on 75 percent of the producers' 2019 production.

Dairy (cow's milk) payments will be based on actual milk production from April 1 to Aug. 31, 2020. The milk production for Sept. 1, 2020, to Dec. 31, 2020, will be estimated by FSA.

Eligible beef cattle, hogs and pigs, and lambs and sheep payments will be based on the maximum owned inventory of eligible livestock, excluding breeding stock, on a date selected by the producer, between April 16, 2020, and Aug. 31, 2020.

Flat-rate Crops Crops that either do not meet the 5-percent price decline trigger or do not have data available to calculate a price change will have payments calculated based on eligible 2020 acres multiplied by \$15 per acre. These crops include alfalfa, extra long staple (ELS) cotton, oats, peanuts, rice, hemp, millet, mustard, safflower, sesame, triticale, rapeseed, and several others.

Sales Commodities Sales commodities include specialty crops; aquaculture; nursery crops and floriculture; other commodities not included in the price trigger and flat-rate categories, turfgrass sod; pullets; goat milk; mink (including pelts); mohair; wool; and other livestock (excluding breeding stock), not included under the price trigger category that were grown for food, fiber, fur, or feathers. Payment calculations will use a sales-based approach, where producers are paid based on five payment gradations associated with their 2019 sales, and crop insurance indemnities, Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), and Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program Plus (WHIP+) payments for crop year 2019.

Applying for CFAP 2

Visit farmers.gov/cfap for details on all eligible commodities, producer eligibility, payment limitations and structure and additional program resources.

Producers have multiple options to apply for CFAP 2, including through an online application portal and by working directly with the FSA office. Customers seeking one-on-one support with the CFAP 2 application process can call 877-508-8364 to speak directly with a USDA employee ready to offer assistance.

Additional CFAP Payments for Beef and Row-Crop Producers

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, authorizes an increase in CFAP 1 payment rates for cattle. Cattle producers with approved CFAP 1 applications will automatically receive these payments and do not need to submit a new application since payments are based on previously approved CFAP 1 applications. Producers may be asked for additional information depending on how they filed the original application. Information on the additional payment rates for cattle can be found on farmers.gov/cfap.

This act also authorized additional CFAP assistance of \$20 per acre for producers of eligible CFAP 2 flat-rate or price trigger commodities. FSA will automatically issue payments to eligible producers based on the eligible acres included on their CFAP 2 applications. Eligible producers do not need to submit a new CFAP 2 application.

Additional CFAP Actions

FSA has also begun payment processing applications filed as part of the CFAP Additional Assistance program in the following categories:

- Applications filed for pullets and turfgrass sod;

- A formula correction for row-crop producer applications to allow producers with a non-Actual Production History (APH) insurance policy to use 100% of the 2019 Agriculture Risk Coverage-County Option (ARC-CO) benchmark yield in the calculation; and
- Sales commodity applications revised to include insurance indemnities, Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program payments, and Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program Plus payments.

Additional payments for swine producers and contract growers under CFAP Additional Assistance remain on hold and are likely to require modifications to the regulation as part of the broader evaluation and future assistance; however, FSA will continue to accept applications from interested producers.

FSA Offers Disaster Assistance for Qualifying Tree, Bush and Vine Losses

If you're an orchardist or nursery tree grower whose experienced losses from natural disasters during calendar year 2021, you must submit a TAP application either 90 calendar days after the disaster event or the date when the loss is apparent.

TAP provides financial assistance to help you replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes and vines damaged by natural disasters.

Eligible tree types include trees, bushes or vines that produce an annual crop for commercial purposes. Nursery trees include ornamental, fruit, nut and Christmas trees that are produced for commercial sale. Trees used for pulp or timber are ineligible.

To qualify for TAP, orchardists must suffer a qualifying tree, bush or vine loss in excess of 15 percent mortality from an eligible natural disaster, plus an adjustment for normal mortality. The eligible trees, bushes or vines must have been owned when the natural disaster occurred; however, eligible growers are not required to own the land on which the eligible trees, bushes and vines were planted.

If the TAP application is approved, the eligible trees, bushes and vines must be replaced within 12 months from the date the application is approved. The cumulative total quantity of acres planted to trees, bushes or vines, for which you can receive TAP payments, cannot exceed 1,000 acres annually. For further assistance please contact your local [USDA Service Center](#).

Cover Crop Guidelines

The Farm Service Agency (FSA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Risk Management Agency (RMA) worked together to develop consistent, simple and a flexible policy for cover crop practices.

Cover crops, such as grasses, legumes and forbs, can be planted: with no subsequent crop planted, before a subsequent crop, after prevented planting acreage, after a planted crop, or into a standing crop.

Termination:

The cover crop termination guidelines provide the timeline for terminating cover crops, are based on zones and apply to non-irrigated cropland. To view the zones and additional guidelines visit nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/landuse/crops/ and click "Cover Crop Termination Guidelines."

The cover crop may be terminated by natural causes, such as frost, or intentionally terminated through chemical application, crimping, rolling, tillage or cutting. A cover crop managed and terminated according to NRCS Cover Crop Termination Guidelines is **not** considered a crop for crop insurance purposes.

Reporting:

The intended use of cover only will be used to report cover crops. This includes crops

that were terminated by tillage and reported with an intended use code of green manure. An FSA policy change will allow cover crops to be hayed and grazed. Program eligibility for the cover crop that is being hayed or grazed will be determined by each specific program.

If the crop reported as cover only is harvested for any use other than forage or grazing and is not terminated properly, then that crop will no longer be considered a cover crop.

Crops reported with an intended use of cover only will not count toward the total cropland on the farm. In these situations, a subsequent crop will be reported to account for all cropland on the farm.

For further assistance please contact your local [USDA Service Center](#).

Reporting Organic Crops

If you want to use the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) organic price and selected the "organic" option on your NAP application, you must report your crops as organic.

When certifying organic acres, the buffer zone acreage must be included in the organic acreage.

You must also provide a current organic plan, organic certificate or documentation from a certifying agent indicating an organic plan is in effect. Documentation must include:

- name of certified individuals
- address
- telephone number
- effective date of certification
- certificate number
- list of commodities certified
- name and address of certifying agent
- a map showing the specific location of each field of certified organic, including the buffer zone acreage

Certification exemptions are available for producers whose annual gross agricultural income from organic sales totals \$5,000 or less. Although exempt growers are not required to provide a written certificate, they are still required to provide a map showing the specific location of each field of certified organic, transitional and buffer zone acreage. For questions about reporting organic crops, contact your local USDA Service Center at [USDA Service Centers](#).

Actively Engaged Provisions for Non-Family Joint Operations or Entities

Many Farm Service Agency (FSA) programs require all program participants, either individuals or legal entities, to be "actively engaged in farming." This means participants provide a significant contribution to the farming operation, whether it is capital, land, equipment, active personal labor and/or management. For entities, each partner, stockholder or member with an ownership interest,

must contribute active personal labor and/or management to the operation on a regular basis that is identifiable and documentable as well as separate and distinct from contributions of any other member. Members of joint operations must have a share of the profits or losses from the farming operation commensurate with the member's contributions to the operation and must make contributions to the farming operation that are at risk for a loss, with the level of risk being commensurate with the member's claimed share on the farming operation.

Joint operations comprised of non-family members or partners, stockholders or persons with an ownership in the farming operation must meet additional payment eligibility provisions. Joint operations comprised of family members are exempt from these additional requirements. For 2016 and subsequent crop years, non-family joint operations can have one member that may use a significant contribution of active personal management exclusively to meet the requirements to be determined "actively engaged in farming." The person or member will be defined as the farm manager for the purposes of administering these management provisions.

Non-family joint operations may request to add up to two additional managers for their farming operation based on the size and/or complexity of the operation. If additional farm managers are requested and approved, all members who contribute management are required to complete form CCC-902MR, *Management Activity Record*. The farm manager should use the form to record management activities including capital, labor and agronomics, which includes crop selection, planting decisions, acquisition of inputs, crop management and marketing decisions. One form should be used for each month and the farm manager should enter the number of hours of time spent for each activity under the date of the month the actions were completed. The farm manager must also document if each management activity was completed on the farm or remotely.

The records and supporting business documentation must be maintained and timely made available for review by the appropriate FSA reviewing authority, if requested.

If the farm manager fails to meet these requirements, their contribution of active personal management to the farming operation for payment eligibility purposes will be disregarded and their payment eligibility status will be re-determined for the applicable program year.

In some instances, additional persons or members of a non-family member joint operation who meet the definition of farm manager may also be allowed to use such a contribution of active personal management to meet the eligibility requirements. However, under no circumstances may the number of farm managers in a non-family joint operation exceed a total of three in any given crop and program year. For further assistance please contact your local [USDA Service Center](#).

New Frameworks Guide Conservation Action on America's Working Rangelands

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced April 7 the unveiling of new action-based frameworks to increase conservation work to address threats facing America's working rangelands. These frameworks are designed to benefit both agriculture and wildlife in sagebrush and grassland landscapes of the western United States.

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) partnered with state-level organizations from across the West to develop the new frameworks to combat the most severe and large-scale threats: woody encroachment, land-use conversion, exotic annual grass invasion and riparian and wet meadow degradation. More than one million acres of Western rangelands are lost annually to invading non-native grasses, plows, or land development. The frameworks will help guide voluntary conservation work over the next five years and will contribute to USDA's efforts to make our nation a leader on climate change mitigation, adaptation, and resilience.

"America's iconic rangelands support ranchers and rural communities, provide wildlife habitat, and store carbon," said Gloria Montañó Greene, USDA deputy undersecretary for food production and conservation. "Under these new frameworks, NRCS and grassroots partners will defend intact

grasslands, reduce vulnerability to future threats and conserve the last remaining rangeland regions west of the Mississippi River. They provide a common vision and coordination to address resource concerns and ecosystem threats across state boundaries, and new scientific tools now provide unprecedented opportunities to develop strategic approaches to combat these issues, especially when combined with on-the-ground landowner and rancher expertise.”

In 2020, a multi-state planning effort produced the first biome-scale frameworks for wildlife conservation on working rangelands in grassland and sagebrush biomes. A biome is a large area of land that is classified based on the climate, plants and animals that make their homes there. This joint effort builds on past achievements of the Lesser Prairie-Chicken and Sage Grouse Initiatives that together have partnered with more than 3,261 ranchers and conserved 10,309,950 acres of working rangelands. This is an area more than four times the size of Yellowstone National Park that supports working agricultural operations while providing critical wildlife habitat and valuable carbon sequestration.

New frameworks efforts will further support conservation and restoration of rangelands through practices that limit soil disturbance, support proper grazing management, promote the strategic use of prescribed fire and support native grassland species with deep root systems to increase grassland carbon stocks.

As the targeted strategies in the frameworks are implemented locally, NRCS will provide annual tracking and reporting of milestones, assistance in spatial targeting and ongoing science-based assessments of conservation outcomes. For example, the Rangeland Analysis Platform (RAP) provides vegetation data to inform land management and conservation strategies. The free, online tool empowers landowners and resource managers to track vegetation over the past 35 years, equipping them with information to target actions and achieve desired outcomes.

This work will be guided by Working Lands for Wildlife (WLFW), the premier approach of NRCS for conserving American working lands to benefit people, wildlife and rural communities. Rather than individual funding sources used in previous initiatives, the new frameworks utilize the full force of conservation partner resources. This also allows WLFW to bring together expertise across boundaries and create a strategic approach targeting the most severe and large-scale threats causing biome-level impacts.

How Landowners Can Get Involved

Farmers, ranchers and private landowners in the sagebrush or Great Plains region can work with NRCS to implement conservation practices on their working lands, including those that further these two conservation action plans. NRCS provides technical and financial assistance for prescribed grazing, prescribed burning, woody species removal and other key practices. To learn more, contact your local [USDA Service Centers](#).

Conservation at USDA

Under the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is engaged in a whole-of-government effort to combat the climate crisis and conserve and protect our nation’s lands, biodiversity and natural resources including our soil, air and water. Through conservation practices and partnerships, 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.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America’s food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit www.usda.gov. For webinar information or to learn more about the frameworks, visit wfw.rangelands.app.

Applying for Beginning Farmer Loans

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) assists beginning farmers to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these designated farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

- Has operated a farm for not more than 10 years
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm
- Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA
- Does not own a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county's average size farm.

For further assistance please contact your local [USDA Service Center](#) or visit fsa.usda.gov.

Showcasing Oregon Agriculture!

To receive your copy of the *USDA in Oregon 2021* calendar please call your local USDA Service Center to make an appointment or if you would like a copy mailed to you. [Click here to find a local USDA Service Center](#). Also, don't forget to send in your photos of Oregon agriculture during 2021 for use in the 2022 *USDA in Oregon* photo calendar! [Click here to view the flyer and consent form](#).

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).



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