



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

## Virginia December Newsletter Articles and Updates - December 2021

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## FSA Acting State Director Message

On the behalf of Virginia Farm Service Agency, I wish you happiness and good health during this wonderful holiday season. This is a time filled with love, family, and friends.

As you work on your farms, I hope you will remain healthy and stay safe. As Virginia Acting State Executive Director, one of the most enjoyable aspects of the holiday season is sharing the joy and excitement with friends, coworkers, and families.

## **FSA's Holiday wish is for our producers to submit their loan applications early!**

The Farm Loan Program team in Virginia is already working on operating loans for Spring 2022 and asks potential borrowers to submit their requests early to help ensure timely processing. Contact your local FSA office to discuss program eligibility and available programs that may best fit the needs of your farming operation.

### Loans available through FSA Farm Loan Programs:

**Farm Operating loans** can help large and small farm operations take advantage of early purchasing discounts for spring inputs as well expenses throughout the year. Farm operating loans may also be used to purchase necessary livestock or equipment for your operation.

**Farm Ownership loans** can be used to purchase or enlarge farms or make capital improvements to a farming operation.

**Microloans** provide up to \$50,000 for both Farm Ownership and Operating purposes to eligible applicants. The microloan application process is simpler and requires less paperwork to complete, which is consistent with a smaller loan amount. Eligibility, feasibility, and security requirements still apply.

### Loans available through FSA Farm Programs:

**Marketing Assistance Loans** allow producers to use eligible commodities as loan collateral and obtain a 9-month loan while the crop is in storage.

**Farm Storage Facility Loans** can be used to build permanent structures used to store eligible commodities, for storage and handling trucks, or portable or permanent handling equipment.

**Wishing you a happy holiday season and a joyous new year!**

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## **NRCS State Conservationist's Message**

If you're like me, you usually map out the route for any journey into unfamiliar territory. You want to know how long it will take to get there and to select the best route for the trip. Your end goal will play a big role in deciding whether to take the back roads or opt for the interstate.

Conservation is really no different. Our agency has recently announced priorities that will help guide our programs delivery and technical assistance throughout Fiscal Year 2022. As we're taking this journey together, I thought I'd share them with you now:

1. Ensure equity in the delivery and implementation of all NRCS programs and services.
2. Increase assistance for climate-smart agriculture and forestry to support producers in building resiliency across their operations.

3. Expand conservation tools and support to address the unique needs of urban farmers and communities nationwide.
4. Cultivate a complete and diverse workforce that has the right tools, technologies and training to uphold the scientific integrity of NRCS.
5. Leverage innovative partnerships to expand NRCS's ability to get conservation on the ground effectively and efficiently.

What will this announcement mean to you? To our many conservation partners, it means that we're very interested in learning about your goals for the next year and that my door will always be open to explore options for integrating those goals into current joint initiatives and future grant proposals.

To our thousands of Virginia farmers, it means we will be here, as always, to help you address natural resource concerns on your land. For those who have taken the first steps, we will continue to offer "next level" programs that build on what you've already done. It also means that we are committed as an agency to fairness and diversity in hiring and objectivity and impartiality in the reviewing of applications for financial assistance.

Our course is set. Is there a way we can assist you with yours?

Wishing you all a *¡Feliz Navidad y próspero Año Nuevo!*

Dr. Edwin Martinez Martinez, State Conservationist

## **USDA Builds Pandemic Support for Certified Organic and Transitioning Operations**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will provide pandemic assistance to cover certification and education expenses to agricultural producers who are certified organic or transitioning to organic. USDA will make \$20 million available through the new [Organic and Transitional Education and Certification Program \(OTECP\)](#) as part of USDA's broader [Pandemic Assistance for Producers initiative](#), which provides new, broader and more equitable opportunities for farmers, ranchers and producers.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, certified organic and transitional operations faced challenges due to loss of markets, and increased costs and labor shortages, in addition to costs related to obtaining or renewing their organic certification, which producers and handlers of conventionally grown commodities do not incur. Transitional operations also faced the financial challenge of implementing practices required to obtain organic certification without being able to obtain the premium prices normally received for certified organic commodities.

### **Eligible Expenses**

OTECP funding is provided through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). Certified operations and transitional operations may apply for OTECP for eligible expenses paid during the 2020, 2021 and 2022 fiscal years. 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.

### **Applying for Assistance**

Signup for 2020 and 2021 OTECP will be Nov. 8, 2021, through Jan. 7, 2022. Producers apply through their local Farm Service Agency (FSA) office and can also obtain one-on-one support with applications by calling 877-508-8364. Visit [farmers.gov/otecp](https://farmers.gov/otecp) to learn more.

### **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. This year's application period for OCCSP ended Nov. 1, 2021.

Additionally, USDA's Risk Management Agency announced improvements to the Whole-Farm Revenue Program including increasing expansion limits for organic producers to the higher of \$500,000 or 35%. Previously, small and medium size organic operations were held to the same 35% limit to expansion as conventional practice producers. Also, producers can now report acreage as certified organic, or as acreage in transition to organic, when the producer has requested an organic certification by the acreage reporting date.

To learn more about USDA's assistance for organic producers, visit [usda.gov/organic](https://usda.gov/organic).

As USDA looks for long-term solutions to build back a better food system, the Department is committed to delivery of financial assistance to farmers, ranchers and agricultural producers and businesses who have been impacted by COVID-19 market disruptions. Since USDA rolled out the Pandemic Assistance for Producers initiative in March, the Department has provided support to America's farmers and ranchers including:

- \$18 billion in [Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2](#) payments, including a fourfold increase in participation by historically underserved producers since the program reopened in April 2021.

- Over \$35 million in assistance for those who had to depopulate livestock and poultry due to insufficient processing access ([Pandemic Livestock Indemnity Program](#)).
- Over \$7 million to date for the logging and log hauling industry ([Pandemic Assistance for Timber Harvesters and Haulers](#)). Final payments are being calculated to be disbursed soon.
- \$1 billion to [purchase healthy food for food insecure Americans and build food bank capacity](#).
- \$350 million in [additional dairy assistance related to market volatility](#).
- [\\$500 million deployed through existing USDA programs](#).

For more details, please visit [www.farmers.gov/pandemic-assistance](http://www.farmers.gov/pandemic-assistance).

## USDA Offers Disaster Assistance for Producers Facing Inclement Weather

Severe weather events create significant challenges and often result in catastrophic loss for agricultural producers. Despite every attempt to mitigate risk, your operation may suffer losses. USDA offers several programs to help with recovery.

### Risk Management

For producers who have risk protection through [Federal Crop Insurance](#) or the [Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program](#) (NAP), we want to remind you to report crop damage to your crop insurance agent or the local Farm Service Agency (FSA) office.

If you have crop insurance, contact your agency within 72 hours of discovering damage and be sure to follow up in writing within 15 days. If you have NAP coverage, file a Notice of Loss (also called Form CCC-576) within 15 days of loss becoming apparent, except for hand-harvested crops, which should be reported within 72 hours.

### Disaster Assistance

USDA also offers disaster assistance programs, which is especially important to livestock, fruit and vegetable, specialty and perennial crop producers who have fewer [risk management options](#).

First, the [Livestock Indemnity Program](#) (LIP) and [Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybee and Farm-raised Fish Program](#) (ELAP) reimburses producers for a portion of the value of livestock, poultry and other animals that died as a result of a qualifying natural disaster event or for loss of grazing acres, feed and forage. And, the [Livestock Forage Disaster Program](#) (LFP) provides assistance to producers of grazed forage crop acres that have suffered crop loss due to a qualifying drought. Livestock producers suffering the impacts of drought can also request [Emergency Haying and Grazing](#) on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres.

Next, the [Tree Assistance Program](#) (TAP) provides cost share assistance to rehabilitate and replant tree, vines or shrubs loss experienced by orchards and nurseries. This

complements NAP or crop insurance coverage, which cover the crop but not the plants or trees in all cases.

For LIP and ELAP, you will need to file a Notice of Loss for livestock and grazing or feed losses within 30 days and honeybee losses within 15 days. For TAP, you will need to file a program application within 90 days.

### **Documentation**

It's critical to keep accurate records to document all losses following this devastating cold weather event. Livestock producers are advised to document beginning livestock numbers by taking time and date-stamped video or pictures prior to after the loss.

Other common documentation options include:

- Purchase records
- Production records
- Vaccination records
- Bank or other loan documents
- Third-party certification

### **Other Programs**

The [Emergency Conservation Program](#) and [Emergency Forest Restoration Program](#) can assist landowners and forest stewards with financial and technical assistance to restore damaged farmland or forests.

Additionally, FSA offers a variety of loans available including emergency loans that are triggered by disaster declarations and operating loans that can assist producers with credit needs. You can use these loans to replace essential property, purchase inputs like livestock, equipment, feed and seed, or refinance farm-related debts, and other needs.

Meanwhile, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides financial resources through its [Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#) to help with immediate needs and long-term support to help recover from natural disasters and conserve water resources. Assistance may also be available for emergency animal mortality disposal from natural disasters and other causes.

### **Additional Resources**

Additional details – including payment calculations – can be found on our [NAP](#), [ELAP](#), [LIP](#), and [TAP](#) fact sheets. On farmers.gov, the [Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool](#), [Disaster-at-a-Glance fact sheet](#), and [Farm Loan Discovery Tool](#) can help you determine program or loan options.

While we never want to have to implement disaster programs, we are here to help. To file a Notice of Loss or to ask questions about available programs, contact your local USDA Service Center. All [USDA Service Centers](#) are open for business, including those that restrict in-person visits or require appointments because of the pandemic.

# USDA Climate Hubs

The USDA Climate Hubs translate climate science into action, putting USDA research and resources into practice. The Hubs develop and deliver science-based, region-specific information and technology to natural resource and agricultural managers to help you make climate-informed decisions that reduce agricultural risk and build resilience to climate change. Our useful tools can help you plan for and manage weather- and climate-related risks.

The Climate Hubs offer a variety of resources to help you manage weather and climate risks, including tools and technology, outreach and education, and risk assessments:

- Tools and technology to help you respond effectively to climate change impacts including drought, extreme weather events, and changing growing seasons. We provide coordinated technical support to enhance USDA program delivery, especially to underserved and vulnerable communities.

The following tools can help you make informed management decisions on your operation:

- [Adaptation Workbook](#): A flexible process to consider the potential effects of climate change and design land management and conservation actions to prepare for changing conditions.
- [Grass-Cast](#): A grassland and forage productivity forecast for ranchers and rangeland managers.
- [AgRisk Viewer](#): A new platform to access, analyze, and visualize historical crop insurance loss data to inform risk management efforts.
- [Seedlot Selection Tool](#): A web-based mapping application that uses current or future climates to match seedlots and planting sites.
- Outreach, education, and technical support on innovative ways to help lower barriers to adaptation, mitigation, and resilience-building:
  - [Hurricane preparedness and recovery commodity guides](#): Guides to help producers prepare for and recover from hurricane events.
  - [‘As If You Were There’ 360 Demonstrations](#): A unique collection of virtual field tours to experience how others are adapting to and mitigating extreme weather and climate-driven events.
  - [Pacific Northwest Biochar Atlas](#): Science-based guidance regarding biochar and its benefits, decision-support tools for biochar application, and case studies from early adopters.
- [Regional assessments of risk and vulnerability](#) and user-friendly information and data to support risk management and climate change response.

The Climate Hubs are a unique collaboration that connects USDA research and program agencies like the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Farm Service Agency

(FSA), Risk Management Agency (RMA), Economic Research Service, and Foreign Agricultural Service, among others.

We support USDA stakeholders by providing vulnerability assessments, curating decision-making tools, and facilitating stakeholder outreach on climate change and its impacts on working lands.

The Climate Hubs also amplify the work of other USDA agencies to ensure USDA is meeting the needs of customers like you.

- For example, the Southwest Climate Hub worked with RMA to provide more accessible, discoverable, and usable crop insurance data through the [AgRisk Viewer](#).
- Our Northern Plains Climate Hub developed a grassland and forage productivity model and [rangeland drought dashboard](#) working closely with agencies and partners.
- At our Northeast Climate Hub, the NRCS liaison developed a [webinar training](#) titled “*Helping farmers help the land through climate-smart farming*” highlighting NRCS resource concerns and practices.

There are 10 regional Climate Hubs across the nation co-located at Agricultural Research Service (ARS) and U.S. Forest Service (USFS) research units. To find your regional Climate Hub contacts visit [climatehubs.usda.gov/contact](#). For more information on the Climate Hubs, visit [climatehubs.usda.gov/](#). We are happy to help connect producers, USDA staff, and stakeholders to each other and to the best resources USDA has to offer.

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## USDA Supports Military Veteran’s Transition to Farming

Are you a military veteran interested in farming? USDA offers resources to help you:

- **Fund Your Operation:** USDA’s Farm Service Agency offers a variety of [funding opportunities](#) to help agricultural producers finance their businesses. Certain funds are targeted for veterans and beginning farmers and ranchers.
- **Conserve Natural Resources:** USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service offers [conservation programs and expert one-on-one technical assistance](#) to strengthen agricultural operations now and into the future. Veterans may be eligible for a cost share of up to 90 percent and advance payments of up to 50 percent to cover certain conservation practices.
- **Manage Risks:** USDA is here to help you prepare for and recover from the unexpected. Veterans who are beginning farmers may be eligible for reduced premiums, application fee waivers, increased insurance coverage, and other incentives for multiple [USDA programs that support risk management](#).

USDA wants to ensure that veterans transitioning to agriculture have the resources needed to succeed. While USDA offices are currently closed to visitors because of the pandemic, Service Center staff continue to work with agricultural producers via phone, email, and other digital tools. To conduct business, please contact your local USDA Service Center. Additionally, more information related to USDA's response and relief for producers can be found at [farmers.gov/coronavirus](https://farmers.gov/coronavirus). If you're a new farmer, you can also reach out to your [state Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coordinator](#)

## USDA Provides \$1.8 Billion to Offset Market Fluctuations

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is in the process of issuing \$1.8 billion in payments to agricultural producers who enrolled in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for the 2020 crop year. These payments provide critical support to help mitigate fluctuations in either revenue or prices for certain crops. These two USDA safety-net programs help producers of certain crops build back better after facing the impacts of COVID-19 and other challenges.

In addition, USDA's Farm Service Agency (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.

### 2020 Payments and Contracts

ARC and PLC payments for a given crop year are paid out the following fall to allow actual county yields and the Market Year Average prices to be finalized. This month, FSA processed payments to producers enrolled in 2020 ARC-County (ARC-CO), ARC-Individual (ARC-IC) and PLC for covered commodities that triggered for the crop year.

For ARC-CO, view the [2020 ARC-CO Benchmark Yields and Revenues online database](#) for payment rates applicable to their county and each covered commodity.

For PLC, payments have triggered for barley, canola, chickpeas (large and small), dry peas, flaxseed, lentils, peanuts, seed cotton and wheat. More information on rice payments will be announced later this fall and in early 2022.

For ARC-IC, producers should contact their local FSA office for additional information pertaining to 2020 payment information, which relies on producer-specific yields for the crop and farm to determine benchmark yields and actual year yields when calculating revenues.

### By the Numbers

More than 1.7 million contracts were signed in 2019. In 2020, producers signed nearly 1.8 million ARC or PLC contracts, and 251 million out of 273 million base acres were enrolled in the programs. In 2021, signed contracts surpassed 1.8 million.

Since the ARC and PLC were authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill and reauthorized by the 2018 Farm Bill, these safety-net programs have paid out more than \$32.5 billion to producers of covered commodities.

## **2022 Elections and Enrollment**

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, long grain rice, medium and short grain rice, safflower seed, seed cotton, 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.

Upland cotton farmers who choose to enroll seed cotton base acres in ARC or PLC are ineligible for the stacked income protection plan (STAX) on their planted cotton acres for that farm.

### More Information

For more information on ARC and PLC, visit the [ARC and PLC webpage](#) or contact your local [USDA Service Center](#).

## USDA Launches First Phase of Soil Carbon Monitoring Efforts through CRP

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is investing \$10 million in a new initiative to sample, measure, and monitor soil carbon on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres to better quantify the climate outcomes of the program. CRP is an important tool in the Nation's fight to reduce the worst impacts of climate change facing our farmers, ranchers, and foresters. This initiative will begin implementation in fall 2021 with three partners. Today's announcement is part of a broader, long-term soil carbon monitoring effort across agricultural lands that supports USDA's commitment to deliver climate solutions to agricultural producers and rural America through voluntary, incentive-based solutions.

These models include the Daily Century Model, or DayCent, which simulates the movement of carbon and nitrogen through agricultural systems and informs the [National Greenhouse Gas Inventory](#). Data will also be used to strengthen the [COMET-Farm](#) and [COMET-Planner](#) tools, which enable producers to evaluate potential carbon sequestration and greenhouse gas emission reductions based on specific management scenarios.

USDA partners will conduct soil carbon sampling on three categories of CRP practice types: perennial grass, trees, and wetlands.

**Perennial grasses:** In consultation with USDA, Michigan State University will sample and measure soil carbon and bulk density of CRP grasslands (including native grass plantings, rangelands, and pollinator habitat plantings) at an estimated 600 sites across the U.S. with a focus in the central states during this five-year project. This information will be used to model and compare the climate benefits of CRP. Partners include the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, Deveron, an agriculture technology company, and Woods End Laboratories.

**Trees:** Mississippi State University will partner with Alabama A&M University to collect above and below ground data at 162 sites across seven states documenting CRP-related benefits to soil and atmospheric carbon levels. Information will help further calibrate the DayCent model. This five-year project will focus within the Mississippi Delta and Southeast states.

**Wetlands:** Ducks Unlimited and its partners will collect data on carbon stocks in wetland soils as well as vegetation carbon levels at 250 wetland sites across a 15-state area in the central U.S. Data will support the DayCent and additional modeling. Partners for this five-

year project include: Migratory Bird Joint Venture, Intertribal Research and Resource Center at United Tribes Technical College, Clemson University, Kenyon College, Lincoln University, Pennsylvania State University, the University of Missouri, and the University of Texas at Austin.

### **CRP Monitoring, Assessment, and Evaluation Projects**

These three Climate Change Mitigation Assessment Initiative projects are funded through FSA's program to work with partners to identify [Monitoring, Assessment and Evaluation \(MAE\)](#) projects to quantify CRP environmental benefits to water quality and quantity, wildlife, and rural economies.

Applications for projects were welcome from all organizations, including public, private, nonprofit institutions, and educational institutions including historically Black colleges and universities, Tribal colleges and universities and Hispanic-serving institutions or organizations.

For more details on the all the awarded MAE projects, visit the [FSA Monitoring Assessment & Evaluation webpage](#).

### **About the Conservation Reserve Program**

CRP is one of the world's largest voluntary conservation programs, with an established track record of preserving topsoil, sequestering carbon, reducing nitrogen runoff and providing healthy habitat for wildlife.

In exchange for a yearly rental payment, agricultural producers enrolled in the program agree to remove environmentally sensitive land from production and plant species that will improve environmental health and quality. In general, land is enrolled in CRP for 10 to 15 years, with the option of re-enrollment. [FSA offers multiple CRP signups](#), including the general signup and continuous signup, as well as Grassland CRP and pilot programs focused on soil health and clean water. In 2021, producers and landowners enrolled more than 5.3 million acres in CRP signups, surpassing USDA's 4-million-acre goal.

Earlier this year, [USDA announced updates to CRP](#) including higher payment rates, new incentives for environmental practices, and a more targeted focus on the program's role in climate change mitigation. This included a new Climate-Smart Practice Incentive for CRP general and continuous signups that aims to increase carbon sequestration and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Climate-Smart CRP practices include establishment of trees and permanent grasses, development of wildlife habitat, and wetland restoration.

Download the ["What's New" fact sheet](#) to learn more about CRP updates.

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## **USDA Reminds Producers to File Crop Acreage Reports**

Agricultural producers who have not yet completed their [crop acreage reports](#) after spring planting should make an appointment with their local County Farm Service Agency (FSA) before the applicable deadline.

An acreage report documents a crop grown on a farm or ranch and its intended uses. Filing an accurate and timely acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planted acreage, can prevent the loss of benefits.

### How to File a Report

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable for all Virginia Counties:

January 15, 2022	Apples, Peaches, Fall-Seeded Small Grains, Canola, Grapes
May 15, 2022	Cabbage (Planted 3/16-4/15), Spring Oats, Potatoes, Tomatoes (Planted on or before 5/15)
June 15, 2022	Beans (Planted 3/4-5/25)
*July 15, 2022	Beans (Planted 5/26-7/10), Tomatoes (Planted 5/16-7/5), Tomatoes, Perennial Forage
August 15, 2022	Cabbage (Planted 4/16-7/10)
September 15, 2022	Beans (Planted 7/15-9/5)
November 15, 2022	Apiculture
November 30, 2022	Clams

\*All other crops not listed have an acreage reporting date of July 15, 2022

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 local County FSA office to set up an in-person or phone appointment.

To file a crop acreage report, you will need to provide:

- Crop and crop type or variety.
- Intended use of the crop.
- Number of acres of the crop.
- Map with approximate boundaries for the crop.
- Planting date(s).
- Planting pattern, when applicable.
- Producer shares.
- Irrigation practice(s).
- Acreage prevented from planting, when applicable.
- Other information as required.

## Acreage Reporting Details

The following exceptions apply to acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.
- If a producer acquires additional acreage after the acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office.

Producers should also report crop acreage they intended to plant, but due to natural disaster, were unable to plant. Prevented planting acreage must be reported on form CCC-576, Notice of Loss, no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date as established by FSA and USDA's Risk Management Agency.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policy holders should note that the acreage reporting date for NAP-covered crops is the earlier of the dates listed above or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins.

### More Information

For questions, please contact your local County FSA Office.

## USDA Opens 2022 Signup for Dairy Margin Coverage, Expands Program for Supplemental Production

*Signup period will run from Dec. 13, 2021 to Feb. 18, 2022.*

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 from Dec. 13, 2021 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.

## Celebrate the 'Twelve Gifts of Conservation' with NRCS

If you enjoyed advent calendars as a child or simply like a good scavenger hunt, you'll definitely want to check out the #12GiftsofConservation. USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is again offering its own take on this time-honored tradition to help count down to



Christmas with an entertaining and informative look at the long-term benefits of conservation.

Join us as we virtually unwrap a new gift every weekday through Dec. 23 to highlight how activities we undertake today can be some of the most valuable gifts we can pass along to future generations of Virginians. Each includes one or more links to video presentations with additional information on the selected topic that you can access here or through a playlist on our [state YouTube channel](#).

- Gift 1: Crops (Video: [Crop Rotation](#))
- Gift 2: Organic Matter (Video: [No-till](#))
- Gift 3: Natural Resources (Videos: [Grassland Restoration](#) and [Wetland Reserve Easement](#))
- Gift 4: Soil (Videos: [Cover Crops](#) and [Water and Sediment Control \(Catch\) Basin](#))
- Gift 5: Energy (Video: [Pumping Station](#))
- Gift 6: Recreation (Video: [Restored Wetlands](#))
- Gift 7: Vegetation (Videos: [Tree and Shrub Establishment](#) and [Forage and Biomass Planting](#))
- Gift 8: Air (Videos: [Nutrient Management](#) and [Waste Transfer System](#))
- Gift 9: Technology (Video: [Prescribed Grazing](#))
- Gift 10: Irrigation and Water Management (Videos: [Microirrigation](#), [Irrigation Reservoir](#) and [Irrigation Water Management](#))
- Gift 11: Organic Agriculture (Video: [High Tunnel](#))
- Gift 12: Natural Protection (Video: [Forest Stand Improvement](#))

Virginia NRCS will announce and promote each gift on [Twitter](#) and the [farmers.gov Facebook](#) account, making it easier to find the content that most interests you. Contact your local USDA-NRCS field office if you'd like to learn more about any of the topics in this series.

## Progression Lending from FSA

Farm Service Agency (FSA) farm loans are considered progression lending. Unlike loans from a commercial lender, FSA loans are intended to be temporary in nature. Our goal is to help you graduate to commercial credit, and our farm loan staff is available to help borrowers through training and credit counseling.

The FSA team will help borrowers identify their goals to ensure financial success. FSA staff will advise borrowers on developing strategies and a plan to meet your goals and graduate to commercial credit. FSA borrowers are responsible for the success of their farming operation, but FSA staff will help in an advisory role, providing the tools necessary to help you achieve your operational goals and manage your finances.

For more information on FSA farm loan programs, contact your County USDA Service Center or visit [fsa.usda.gov](#).

## Communication is Key in Lending

Farm Service Agency (FSA) is committed to providing our farm loan borrowers the tools necessary to be successful. FSA staff will provide guidance and counsel from the loan application process through the borrower's graduation to commercial credit. While it is FSA's commitment to advise borrowers as they identify goals and evaluate progress, it is crucial for borrowers to communicate with their farm loan staff when changes occur. It is the borrower's responsibility to alert FSA to any of the following:

- Any proposed or significant changes in the farming operation
- Any significant changes to family income or expenses
- The development of problem situations
- Any losses or proposed significant changes in security

If a farm loan borrower can't make payments to suppliers, other creditors, or FSA on time, contact your farm loan staff immediately to discuss loan servicing options.

For more information on FSA farm loan programs, contact your County USDA Service Center or visit [fsa.usda.gov](https://fsa.usda.gov).

## Selected Interest Rates for December 2021

90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	2.00%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	3.00%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.50%
Emergency Loans	3.00%
Farm Storage Facility Loans - (7 years)	1.5%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	1.125%

## Dates to Remember

1/7 OTECP Sign-up Deadline

1/15 Acreage Reporting Deadline for Apples, Peaches, Fall-Seeded Small Grains, Canola, Grapes for 2022

1/30 ELAP Application for Payment Deadline for 2021

2/15 NAP Application for Coverage Deadline for vegetables, most fruits, coarse grains, perennial forages for 2022

2/18 DMC/SMDC Sign-up Deadline for 2022

3/2 LIP Application for Payment Deadline for 2021

3/15 NAP Application for Coverage Deadline for hemp for 2022

3/15 ARC/PLC Election/Enrollment Deadline for 2022



## Virginia FSA State Office

1606 Santa Rosa Road, Suite 138  
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Phone: 804-287-1503 Fax: 855 -621-5866

Office Hours 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

**R. Kevin Bohon**  
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**Helene McGann**  
Administrative Officer

**Whitney Foster**  
Chief Farm Loan Programs

**Allison Goin**  
Chief Farm Programs

**Diane Lenoir-Giles**  
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