

January 2021



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

# NEWSLETTER

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## Washington State FSA Newsletter

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### Washington State Farm Service Agency

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Phone: 509-323-3000  
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[www.fsa.usda.gov/wa](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/wa)

### Environmental Review Required Before Project Implementation

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires Federal agencies to consider all potential environmental impacts for federally funded projects before a project is approved.

For all FSA programs, an environmental review must be completed before actions, such as site preparation or ground disturbance are approved. These programs include, but are not limited to, the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP), Tree Assistance Program (TAP), Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program and farm loans. If project implementation begins before FSA has completed an environmental review, this will result in a denial of the request. There are exceptions regarding the Stafford Act and emergencies. It is important to wait until you receive written approval of your project proposal before starting any actions,

**State Executive Director:**  
Jon Wyss

including, but not limited to, vegetation clearing, site preparation or ground disturbance.

**State Committee:**

Katlenia Vejraska, Chair  
Maureen Harkcom, Member  
Jesus Limon, Member  
Robyn Meenach, Member  
Bruce Nelson, Member

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## Reminder for Deadlines to Submit Applications for Livestock Programs

Deadlines for livestock applications are quickly approaching. Producers must file all supporting documentation and the application for payment by the applicable deadline for each program as mentioned below. Eligible producers under the LIP and ELAP programs must have filed a Notice of Loss within 30 days (15 days for honeybee losses) of when the loss became apparent and the losses must have been due to an eligible adverse weather event.

To find contact information for your local office go to [www.fsa.usda.gov/wa](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/wa)

- Livestock Forage Program (LFP) – **February 1, 2021**
- Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) – **February 1, 2021**
- Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) - **March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021**

Producers should contact their local FSA Office to file all supporting documentation and the final application for payment.

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## Unauthorized Disposition of Grain

If loan grain has been disposed of through feeding, selling, or any other form of disposal without prior written authorization from the county office staff, it is considered unauthorized disposition. The financial penalties for unauthorized dispositions are severe and a producer's name will be placed on a loan violation list for a two-year period. Always contact [your local FSA county office](#) before you haul any grain under loan.

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## 2020 Crop Production Reporting Deadlines for NAP Covered Tree Fruits, Berries, and Grapes Approaching

Reporting of actual harvested production from the 2020 crop year is a requirement for producers who obtained Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage. To retain program eligibility for NAP covered crops, participating producers must annually report actual production to keep NAP program benefits and ensure the NAP actual production history (APH) reflects accurate yield data. Producers of 2020 NAP covered tree fruits (apples, apricots, cherries, nectarines, peaches, pears, plums), nuts, blueberries, cranberries, and grapes must report actual harvested production by **January 15, 2021**.

If actual harvested production for NAP covered crops is not timely submitted to your local county FSA office, NAP benefits for crop losses will not be earned and the NAP yield could begin to drop significantly, affecting your future NAP coverage levels. To report production, complete and sign

form CCC-452 obtained from your local FSA county office. If you have any questions about production reporting or NAP payment requirements, contact [your local FSA county office](#).

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## Seafood Trade Relief Program Deadline Approaching

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will provide approximately \$530 million to support the U.S. seafood industry and commercially licensed fishermen impacted by retaliatory tariffs from foreign governments. Eligible, active commercial fisherman must provide their 2019 production numbers and have an ownership interest in the catch in order to receive a benefit through the program. The following seafood types are covered through STRP: Atka mackerel, Crab (Dungeness, King, Snow, Southern Tanner), Flounder, Geoduck, Goosefish, Herrings, Lobster, Pacific Cod, Pacific Ocean Perch, Pollock, Sablefish, Salmon, Sole, Squid, Tuna, Turbot. The deadline to apply for the Seafood Trade Relief Program (STRP) has been extended to **January 15, 2021**.

The STRP application can be found at [www.farmers.gov/seafood](http://www.farmers.gov/seafood). If there are questions regarding ownership of the claimed 2019 production, additional documentation may be required. Fishermen should apply for the program through their local USDA Service Center by the program deadline. To find your local Service Center, visit [www.farmers.gov/service-center-locator](http://www.farmers.gov/service-center-locator).

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## Marketing Assistance Loans, Loan Deficiency Payments, and Certificates Available

FSA Marketing Assistance Loans are available for harvested commodities. A loan can provide you with interim financing to meet cash flow needs without selling your harvested crop at a time when market prices are at harvest-time lows. Your 2020 harvested farm-stored or warehouse-stored commodity is used as collateral for the loan. Marketing Assistance Loans mature 9 months after the month loan funds are disbursed to you, with repayment due at loan maturity. Before moving farm-stored loan collateral, you must contact the county FSA office and obtain an authorization to move the collateral. Producers who have a commodity pledged as collateral for a marketing assistance loan can purchase a commodity certificate that can be immediately exchanged for the outstanding loan collateral in situations when the loan rate exceeds the exchange rate. Producers who are eligible for marketing assistance loans can obtain a loan deficiency payments (LDPs) in lieu of a loan. LDP's are available when the posted county price for a crop falls below the county loan rate. You can check the daily LDP rates online at <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/price-support/Index>.

Marketing assistance loans or loan deficiency payments are available for wheat, barley, oats, corn, dry peas, lentils, small chickpeas, large chickpeas, grain sorghum, soybeans, sunflower seed, rapeseed, canola, safflower seed, flaxseed, mustard seed, crambe, sesame seed, graded and non-graded wool, mohair, and honey. Unshorn pelts are available for an LDP only.

For a commodity to be eligible for a loan, loan deficiency payment, or certificate, you must have beneficial interest in the commodity which is defined as having title, possession, and control of the commodity. The quality of stored collateral must be maintained, and you are responsible for loss or damage to the commodity through the term of the loan. To retain eligibility for an LDP when beneficial interest in your harvested crop will be lost upon delivery, you must file form CCC-633 EZ Page 1 with your local FSA office prior to loss of beneficial interest.

If you are interested, please contact [your local FSA county office](#) to learn more about Marketing Assistance Loans, LDPs, and Certificates.

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## **SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loans Available to Washington Small Businesses**

Small nonfarm businesses in 13 Washington counties are now eligible to apply for low-interest federal disaster loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration, announced Director Tanya N. Garfield of SBA's Disaster Field Operations Center-West. These loans offset economic losses because of reduced revenues caused by wildfire in the following primary counties that occurred Sept. 7 – Oct. 1, 2020.

Primary counties: Douglas, Lincoln and Okanogan;

Neighboring counties: Adams, Chelan, Ferry, Grant, Kittitas, Skagit, Spokane, Stevens, Whatcom and Whitman.

“SBA eligibility covers both the economic impacts on businesses dependent on farmers and ranchers that have suffered agricultural production losses caused by the disaster and businesses directly impacted by the disaster,” Garfield said.

Small nonfarm businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, small businesses engaged in aquaculture and most private nonprofit organizations of any size may qualify for Economic Injury Disaster Loans of up to \$2 million to help meet financial obligations and operating expenses which could have been met had the disaster not occurred.

“Eligibility for these loans is based on the financial impact of the disaster only and not on any actual property damage. These loans have an interest rate of 3 percent for businesses and 2.75 percent for private nonprofit organizations, a maximum term of 30 years, and are available to small businesses and most private nonprofits without the financial ability to offset the adverse impact without hardship,” Garfield said.

By law, SBA makes Economic Injury Disaster Loans available when the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture designates an agricultural disaster. The Secretary declared this disaster on Dec. 18, 2020.

Businesses primarily engaged in farming or ranching are not eligible for SBA disaster assistance. Agricultural enterprises should contact the Farm Services Agency about the U.S. Department of Agriculture assistance made available by the Secretary's declaration.

Applicants may apply online, receive additional disaster assistance information and download applications at <https://disasterloanassistance.sba.gov/>. Applicants may also call SBA's Customer Service Center at (800) 659-2955 or email [disastercustomerservice@sba.gov](mailto:disastercustomerservice@sba.gov) for more information on SBA disaster assistance. Individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing may call (800) 877-8339. Completed applications should be mailed to U.S. Small Business Administration, Processing and Disbursement Center, 14925 Kingsport Road, Fort Worth, TX 76155.

The deadline to apply for economic injury is Aug. 18, 2021.

## About the U.S. Small Business Administration

The U.S. Small Business Administration makes the American dream of business ownership a reality. As the only go-to resource and voice for small businesses backed by the strength of the federal government, the SBA empowers entrepreneurs and small business owners with the resources and support they need to start, grow or expand their businesses, or recover from a declared disaster. It delivers services through an extensive network of SBA field offices and partnerships with public and private organizations. To learn more, visit [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov).

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## Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Signup Begins January 4

FSA will conduct a general CRP signup **January 4-February 12, 2021**. If you have general CRP contracts that expire on September 30, 2021, this will be your opportunity to re-enroll that land. Producers with expiring general or continuous CRP expiring in 2021 should have received a letter from FSA recently providing information on the options available.

For the general sign up, land must meet basic land eligibility criteria such as being CRP that expires in 2021, highly erodible land as determined by CRP provisions, or be in the state Conservation Priority Area (CPA). New or re-enrolling offers must also have the appropriate cropping history 2012-17. During that time the land must be in annual crops, summer fallow, or CRP, or a few other minor exceptions, for at least 4 of the 6 years.

General CRP offers are all ranked in a national competition. The Secretary will determine the cutoff score for this signup and all offers that rank above that will be accepted. Results should be available March-April. Ranking is done using an Environmental Benefits Index (EBI) that provides ranking points for:

- wildlife benefits associated with the offered CRP cover
- including a wildlife food plot or pollinator plot in the offer
- offering a wildlife-friendly "SAFE" cover if located in a SAFE project area
- potential erosion
- potential water quality benefits
- potential air quality benefits
- covers with trees or those targeting certain declining habitat types
- cost of rental payments
- whether the producer offered less than the maximum rate set by FSA

Offers that include establishing (or established) native species covers, those with more erosive soils, land with greater potential to impact air quality through blowing dust or water quality through runoff or leaching, and those where the producer offers less than the maximum rate generally will rank higher.

In many cases land offered for CRP is eligible for 50% cost sharing to establish the cover. But **significant changes in cost share eligibility** were made with the implementation of the 2018 Farm Bill. An offer to re-enroll expiring CRP that includes a new, higher ranking cover (more diverse

and/or natives) will be eligible for cost sharing. Offers to re-enroll the existing cover where only minor enhancements are needed are also eligible for cost sharing. But offers to re-enroll the existing cover as it, and it is determined the existing cover is not in compliance with the current, expiring contract, are not eligible for any cost sharing. New land not currently in CRP is eligible for cost sharing.

All new contracts will include a requirement to conduct at least one “mid-contract management” activity during the life of the contract to enhance or re-invigorate the stand. These mid-contract management activities is no longer eligible for cost sharing on contract enrolled under the current farm bill.

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## CRP Grassland (CRPG) Signup to Follow General CRP Signup

After the list of accepted and rejected general CRP offers is announced, a CRPG signup will be held **March 15-April 23**. Producers with expiring CRP that was not accepted for re-enrollment may wish to consider enrolling in CRPG. These contracts pay much lower rental rates than regular CRP, but the producer can graze the land as part of a normal grazing operation so long as grazing is conducted in accordance with a NRCS grazing plan. Grassland not currently in CRP are also eligible for CRPG enrollment.

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## Important Dates and Deadlines

**January 1, 2021** – New Year’s Day. USDA service centers will be closed.

**January 1, 2021** – Newly elected county committee members take office.

**January 2, 2021** – 2021 crop acreage reporting deadline for honey. 2020 NAP honey production due

**January 4, 2021** - General CRP Sign-up

**January 15, 2021** – 2021 crop acreage reporting deadline for apples, apricots, blueberries, cherries, cranberries, grapes, nectarines, peaches, pears, and plums. 2020 NAP production due for all listed crops.

**January 15, 2021** – Deadline to apply for 2020 Seafood Trade Relief Program (STRP).

**January 18, 2021** – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. USDA Service Centers will be closed.

**February 1, 2021** – Deadline to file a 2020 ELAP Application for Payment and provide supporting documentation.

**February 1, 2021** – Deadline to file a 2020 LFP Application for Payment and provide supporting documentation.

**February 12, 2021** – Deadline to sign up for General CRP.

**February 15, 2021** – Presidents' Day. USDA Service Centers will be closed.

**February 16, 2021** – Deadline to pay 2020 NAP Premiums.

**March 1, 2021** – Deadline to file a 2020 LIP Application for Payment and provide supporting documentation.

**March 15, 2021** – **Deadline to elect a program and enroll in 2021 ARC/PLC.**

**March 15, 2021** – Deadline to request 2021 NAP coverage for artichokes, beets (seed or fresh), buckwheat, camelina, carrots (fresh or processing), small grain forages (wheat, barley, oats, peas) and other spring planted crops not mentioned in other NAP application for coverage closing dates.

**March 15, 2021** – **CRP Grassland signup period opens. Signup ends April 23, 2021.**

**March 31, 2021** – Final date to request a MAL for 2020 wheat, barley, oats, honey, canola, crambe, flaxseed, rapeseed, and sesame seed.

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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).