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Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

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Wyoming FSA Newsletter

Wyoming Farm Service Agency

951 Werner Court, Suite 130
Casper, Wyoming 82601

Phone: 307-261-5231
Fax: 855-415-3427

www.fsa.usda.gov/wy

State Executive Director:
Lois Van MARK

State Committee:
Nancy Tarver - Chair
David Slover - Member
Lee Craig - Member
Ronald Givens - Member
Pete Arambel - Member

Message from the State Executive Director

The holiday and convention season are upon us! I have recently attended the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts Convention, and plan to attend the upcoming Wyoming Stock Growers Association Convention. I have spoken to the Wyoming L.E.A.D. fellows and will attend several other commodity organizational meetings. I have also been traveling around the state with the staff from our Farm Loan division to meet with and update our banking partners for Guaranteed Lender meetings. This has been a great time to visit with old friends and make new acquaintances while we get the word out about Farm Service Agency.

As I travel around the state and visit with producers, I am often asked about the 2018 Farm Bill. Many FSA programs have been enhanced by the new Farm Bill and provide increased benefits for producers. For example, payment limitations have been raised for several programs. The definition of "Family Member" has been expanded to increase program eligibility for entities. Guaranteed Farm and Operating Loans have increased to \$1.75 million. These

To find contact information for your local office go to www.fsa.usda.gov/wy

are just a few of the positive changes in the new Farm Bill. Please contact your local FSA office for more updates.

Wyoming sugar beet and dry bean producers in the Big Horn Basin and in Goshen, Platte, Laramie and Fremont counties have all suffered production losses due to a recent snowstorm and subsequent freeze. FSA is informing producers and the sugar companies that a disaster declaration does not need to be declared. However, producers must report their "Notice Of Loss" (NOL) to their crop insurance agent. If the producer does not have crop insurance, the Notice of Loss should be reported to the local FSA office. Once all the data of the sugar beet/dry bean harvest has been collected local County Committees (COC) will verify whether a snowstorm occurred and that the subsequent related event of freezing weather was the cause for the loss. Following that determination producers will receive WHIP+ aid. If a producer did not have crop insurance the producer is required to purchase the 2 following years of crop insurance at 65% or higher coverage level in order to receive the WHIP+ aid for 2019. Please contact your local FSA office for more information.

It is now legal to grow industrial hemp. Hemp producers growing in accordance with USDA guidelines are eligible for certain USDA programs in 2020. Farm Service Agency (FSA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and Risk Management Agency (RMA) are updating guidelines on several programs to support growers of hemp, which was reclassified by the 2018 Farm Bill. Once production plans are approved and licenses are issued, hemp producers may be eligible for many USDA programs for the 2020 crop year.

The Whole-Farm Revenue Protection (WFRP) will be available for hemp grown for fiber, flower, or seeds. WFRP allows coverage of all revenue for commodities produced on a farm up to a total insured revenue of \$8.5 million. Producers can purchase WFRP coverage if they have a contract for the purchase of the insured industrial hemp and meet all applicable state, tribal, and federal regulations.

Contact your local FSA office or the Wyoming Department of Agriculture (WDA) to receive more information and when producers can receive the necessary documentation to raise industrial hemp.

Our FSA offices will be closed on Thursday, November 28, for our employees to spend Thanksgiving with their families. We are thankful for the opportunity to live and work in an industry that provides the food and fiber for Thanksgiving and all our holidays. Have a great Thanksgiving!!!

-Lois Van MARK-

USDA Issues Second Tranche of Market Facilitation Program Payments

MFP Enrollment Closes Dec. 6, 2019

USDA announced the second tranche of 2019 Market Facilitation Program (MFP) payments aimed at assisting farmers suffering from damage due to unjustified trade retaliation by foreign nations. Producers of MFP-eligible commodities will now be eligible to receive 25 percent of the total payment expected, in addition to the 50 percent they have already received from the [2019 MFP](#). Second round payments started being issued November 18 for producers who received payments in the first round. Payments will continue through November 28.

Details Regarding Second Tranche of 2019 MFP Payments

MFP signup at local FSA offices will run through Friday, December 6, 2019. Producers who have already applied do not need to apply again to receive the second payment.

Payments will be made by the Farm Service Agency (FSA) under the authority of the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) Charter Act to producers of alfalfa hay, barley, canola, corn, crambe, dried beans, dry peas, extra-long staple cotton, flaxseed, lentils, long grain and medium grain rice, millet, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, rapeseed, rye, safflower, sesame seed, small and large chickpeas, sorghum, soybeans, sunflower seed, temperate japonica rice, triticale, upland cotton, and wheat. MFP assistance for these non-specialty crops is based on a single county payment rate multiplied by a farm's total plantings of MFP-eligible crops in aggregate in 2019. Those per-acre payments are not dependent on which of these crops are planted in 2019. A producer's total payment-eligible plantings cannot exceed total 2018 plantings. County payment rates range from \$15 to \$150 per acre, depending on the impact of unjustified trade retaliation in that county.

Dairy producers who were in business as of June 1, 2019, will receive a per hundredweight payment on Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) production history, and hog producers will receive a payment based on the number of live hogs owned on a day selected by the producer between April 1 and May 15, 2019.

MFP payments will also be made to producers of almonds, cranberries, cultivated ginseng, fresh grapes, fresh sweet cherries, hazelnuts, macadamia nuts, pecans, pistachios, and walnuts. Each specialty crop will receive a payment based on 2019 acres of fruit or nut bearing plants, or in the case of ginseng, based on harvested acres in 2019.

Acreage of non-specialty crops and cover crops had to be planted by August 1, 2019 to be considered eligible for MFP payments.

Per-acre non-specialty crop county payment rates, specialty crop payment rates, and livestock payment rates are all currently available on [farmers.gov](https://www.farmers.gov).

More Information

This is the second of up to three tranches of MFP payments. The third tranche will be evaluated as market conditions and trade opportunities dictate. If conditions warrant, the third tranche will be made in January 2020.

MFP payments are limited to a combined \$250,000 for non-specialty crops per person or legal entity. MFP payments are also limited to a combined \$250,000 for dairy and hog producers and a combined \$250,000 for specialty crop producers. However, no applicant can receive more than \$500,000. Eligible applicants must also have an average adjusted gross income (AGI) for tax years 2015, 2016, and 2017 of less than \$900,000 unless at least 75 percent of the person's or legal entity's AGI is derived from farming, ranching, or forestry related activities. Applicants must also comply with the provisions of the Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation regulations.

For more information on the MFP, visit www.farmers.gov/mfp or contact your local FSA office, which can be found at www.farmers.gov.

USDA Safety Net Program Enrollment Opens for 2020

Agricultural producers now can enroll in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs – two U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) safety net programs – for the 2020 crop year. Meanwhile, producers who enrolled farms for the 2018 crop year have started receiving more than \$1.5 billion for covered commodities for which payments were triggered under such programs.

ARC provides income support payments on historical base acres when actual crop revenue declines below a specified guaranteed level. PLC provides income support payments on historical base acres when the effective price for a covered commodity falls below its reference price. The 2018 Farm Bill reauthorized and updated both programs.

Signup for the 2020 crop year closes June 30, 2020, while signup for the 2019 crop year closes March 15, 2020. Producers who have not yet enrolled for 2019 can enroll for both 2019 and 2020 during the same visit to an FSA county office.

ARC and PLC have options for the farm operator who is actively farming the land as well as the owner of the land. Farm owners also have a one-time opportunity to update PLC payment yields beginning with crop year 2020. If the farm owner and producer visit the FSA county office together, FSA can also update yield information during that visit.

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.

2018 Crop Year ARC and PLC Payments

FSA began processing payments last week for 2018 ARC-County (ARC-CO) and PLC on covered commodities that met payment triggers on enrolled farms in the 2018 crop year. In addition to the \$1.5 billion now in process, FSA anticipates it will issue another \$1 billion in November once USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service publishes additional commodity prices for the 2018 crop.

Producers who had 2018 covered commodities enrolled in ARC-CO can visit www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc for payment rates applicable to their county and each covered commodity. For farms and covered commodities enrolled in 2018 PLC, the following crops met payment triggers: barley, canola, corn, dry peas, grain sorghum, lentils, peanuts, and wheat.

Oats and soybeans did not meet 2018 PLC payment triggers.

2018 PLC payment rates for the following covered commodities have not been determined: crambe, flaxseed, large and small chickpeas, long and medium grain rice, mustard seed, rapeseed, safflower, seed cotton, sesame seed, sunflower seed and temperate Japonica rice.

More Information

For more information on ARC and PLC including two online decision tools that assist producers in making enrollment and election decisions specific to their operations, visit the [ARC and PLC webpage](#).

USDA Opens Signup for Market Facilitation Program

Enrollment Open through Dec. 6

Signup is ongoing for the Market Facilitation Program (MFP), a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) program to assist farmers who continue to suffer from damages because of unjustified trade retaliation from foreign nations. Through MFP, USDA will provide up to \$14.5 billion in direct payments to impacted producers, part of a broader trade relief package announced in late July. The sign-up period runs through Dec. 6, 2019.

MFP payments will be made to producers of certain non-specialty and specialty crops as well as dairy and hog producers.

Non-Specialty Crops

MFP payments will be made to producers of alfalfa hay, barley, canola, corn, crambe, dried beans, dry peas, extra-long staple cotton, flaxseed, lentils, long grain and medium grain rice, millet, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, rapeseed, rye, safflower, sesame seed, small and large chickpeas, sorghum, soybeans, sunflower seed, temperate japonica rice, triticale, upland cotton, and wheat.

MFP assistance for 2019 crops is based on a single county payment rate multiplied by a farm's total plantings to the MFP-eligible crops in aggregate in 2019. Those per acre payments are not dependent on which of those crops are planted in 2019. A producer's total payment-eligible plantings cannot exceed total 2018 plantings. [View payment rates by county](#).

Dairy and Hogs

Dairy producers who were in business as of June 1, 2019, will receive a per hundredweight payment on production history, and hog producers will receive a payment based on the number of live hogs owned on a day selected by the producer between April 1 and May 15, 2019.

Specialty Crops

MFP payments will also be made to producers of almonds, cranberries, cultivated ginseng, fresh grapes, fresh sweet cherries, hazelnuts, macadamia nuts, pecans, pistachios, and walnuts. Each specialty crop will receive a payment based on 2019 acres of fruit or nut bearing plants, or in the case of ginseng, based on harvested acres in 2019.

More Information

Payments will be made in up to three tranches, with the second and third tranches evaluated as market conditions and trade opportunities dictate. If conditions warrant, the second and third tranches will be made in November and early January.

MFP payments are limited to a combined \$250,000 for non-specialty crops per person or legal entity. MFP payments are also limited to a combined \$250,000 for dairy and hog producers and a combined \$250,000 for specialty crop producers. However, no applicant can receive more than \$500,000. Eligible applicants must also have an average adjusted gross income (AGI) for tax years 2015, 2016, and 2017 of less than \$900,000, or 75 percent of the person's or legal entity's average AGI for those tax years must have been derived from farming and ranching. Applicants must also comply with the provisions of the Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation regulations.

More information can be found on farmers.gov/mfp, including payment information and a program application.

Actively Engaged Provisions for Non-Family Joint Operations or Entities

Many Farm Service Agency 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.

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

A new online tool can help farmers and ranchers find information on U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) farm loans that may best fit their operations. USDA has launched the new *Farm Loan Discovery Tool* as the newest feature on farmers.gov, the Department's self-service website for farmers.

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. Compared to this time last year, FSA has seen an 18 percent increase in the amount it has obligated for direct farm ownership loans, and through the 2018 Farm Bill, has [increased the limits](#) for several loan products.

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 be provided 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.

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.

For more information or to locate your USDA Service Center, visit farmers.gov.

Guaranteed Conservation Loans

Guaranteed Conservation Loans are available for applicants to install a conservation practice. These funds may be used for any conservation activities included in a conservation plan or Forest Stewardship Management plan. A copy of the conservation plan is required to complete the application. These loans are not limited to just family farmers. In some cases, applicants can operate non-eligible enterprises. Loan funds are issued by a participating commercial lender and guaranteed up to 80 percent by FSA or up to 90 percent for beginning and historically underserved producers.

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).