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NEWSLETTER

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Wyoming FSA Newsletter

Wyoming Farm Service Agency

951 Werner Ct.
Suite 130
Casper, WY 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

Message from the State Executive Director

The holiday season is rapidly approaching, and traditionally it is time to slow down and spend time with our families. However, FSA county office employees are busier than ever! Processing sign-ups for the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2 (CFAP 2), administering drought assistance programs, finalizing County Committee election results and continuing day to day office operations during a global pandemic has created a tremendous workload on our county offices. Hats off to our dedicated and committed employees!

Currently we have distributed over $54,207,712 in CFAP 2 dollars to over 2,990 producers statewide. If you are a producer and currently not participating in the CFAP 2 program, please call your FSA County Office and make an appointment to determine if you

Ronald Givens - Member
Pete Arambel - Member

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

are eligible. December 11th is the deadline to submit applications, so please call your County Office today.

USDA has declared every county in Wyoming as either a primary or contiguous Natural Disaster area due to drought. This designation allows producers to apply for FSA emergency loans and potentially opens the door for other USDA drought assistance programs. Again, if you are experiencing a shortage of water or feed for your livestock please call your County Office to determine if you are eligible for program assistance.

I would also like to point out a recent change in the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP). New regulations state that qualified military veteran farmers or ranchers are eligible for a service fee waiver and premium reduction, if certain eligibility criteria are met. As a reminder, beginning, limited resource and underserved (includes women) farmers or ranchers are also eligible for a waiver of NAP service fees and premium reduction. Please contact your County Office by December 1st to determine if you qualify or need more information. NAP has been a great insurance program to help producers manage risk for both grazing and haying crop losses due to natural disasters.

Lastly, it is extremely important that every eligible producer cast their votes in this year's County Committee elections. Ballots have been mailed and must be returned to the local FSA county office or postmarked by December 7. County committee members help FSA make important decisions on its commodity support programs, conservation programs, indemnity and disaster programs, and emergency programs and eligibility. So please vote!

Please continue telling your neighbors and friends about our programs. Have a great Thanksgiving!

-Lois Van MARK-

More than $7 Billion Paid in Second Round of USDA Coronavirus Food Assistance Program

USDA announced that in the first month of the application period, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) approved more than $7 billion in payments to producers in the second round of the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program. CFAP 2 provides agricultural producers with financial assistance to help absorb some of the increased marketing costs associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since CFAP 2 enrollment began on September 21, FSA has approved more than 443,000 applications. The top five states for payments are Iowa, Nebraska, Minnesota, Illinois and Kansas. USDA has released a data dashboard on application progress and program payments and will release further updates each Monday at 2:00 p.m. ET. The report can be viewed at farmers.gov/cfap.

Through CFAP 2, USDA is making available up to $14 billion for agricultural producers who continue to face market disruptions and associated costs because of COVID-19. CFAP 2 is a separate program from the first iteration of CFAP (CFAP 1). Farmers and ranchers who participated in CFAP 1 will not be automatically enrolled and must complete a new application for CFAP 2. FSA will accept CFAP 2 applications through December 11, 2020.

Eligible Commodities

CFAP 2 supports eligible producers of row crops, livestock, specialty crops, dairy, aquaculture, and many other commodities, including many that were ineligible for CFAP 1. FSA's CFAP 2 Eligible Commodities Finder makes finding eligible commodities and payment rates simple. Access this tool and other resources at farmers.gov/cfap.

Getting Help from FSA

New 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 general assistance. This is a recommended first step before a producer engages the team at the FSA county office at their local USDA Service Center.

FSA offers multiple options for producers to apply for CFAP 2. Producers with an eAuthentication account can apply online through the CFAP 2 Application Portal. Also available is a payment calculator and application generator that is an Excel workbook that allows producers to input information specific to their operation to determine estimated payments and populate the application form, which can be printed, signed, and submitted to the local FSA office. Producers can also download the CFAP 2 application and other eligibility forms from farmers.gov/cfap.

Producers of acreage-based commodities will use acreage and yield information provided by FSA through the annual acreage reporting process. Producers have the option to complete their application by working directly with their local FSA staff or online through the CFAP 2 Application Portal.

CFAP 2 is not a loan program, and there is no cost to apply.

More Information

To find the latest information on CFAP 2, visit farmers.gov/CFAP or call 877-508-8364.

Enrollment Begins for Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage Programs for 2021

Agricultural producers can now make elections and enroll in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for the 2021 crop year. The signup period opened Tuesday, Oct. 13. These key U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) safety-net programs help producers weather fluctuations in either revenue or price for certain crops, and more than $5 billion in payments are in the process of going out to producers who signed up for the 2019 crop year.

Enrollment for the 2021 crop year closes March 15, 2021.

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.

Covered commodities include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, dry peas, rapeseed, safflower seed, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat.

2021 Elections and Enrollment

Producers can elect coverage and enroll in crop-by-crop ARC-County or PLC, or ARC-Individual for the entire farm, for the 2021 crop year. Although election changes for 2021 are optional, enrollment (signed contract) is required for each year of the program. If a producer has a multi-year contract on the farm and makes an election change for 2021, it will be necessary to sign a new contract.

If an election is not submitted by the deadline of March 15, 2021, the election defaults to the current election for crops on the farm from the prior crop year.

For crop years 2022 and 2023, producers will have an opportunity to make new elections during those signups. Farm owners cannot enroll in either program unless they have a share interest in the farm.

2019 Crop Year ARC and PLC Payments

FSA began processing payments last week for 2019 ARC-County (ARC-CO) and PLC on covered commodities that met payment triggers on farms enrolled for the 2019 crop year. In addition to the $5 billion now in process, FSA anticipates it will issue additional payments by the end of November for 2019 commodities covered under ARC-Individual (ARC-IC) and additional commodities that trigger PLC and ARC-CO payments for which rates have not yet been published.

Producers who had 2019 covered commodities enrolled in ARC-CO can visit the ARC and PLC webpage for payment rates applicable to their county and each covered commodity. For farms and covered commodities enrolled in 2019 PLC, the following crops met payment triggers: barley, canola, chickpeas (small and large), corn, dry peas, grain sorghum, lentils, and wheat.

Oats and soybeans did not meet 2019 PLC payment triggers.

2019 PLC payment rates for the following covered commodities have not been determined: crambe, flaxseed, long and medium grain rice, mustard seed, rapeseed, safflower, sesame seed, sunflower seed and temperate Japonica rice. Payment rates for these commodities will be announced at a later date.

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, the University of Illinois tool that offers farmers the ability to run payment estimate modeling for their farms and counties for ARC-County and PLC.

- ARC and PLC Decision Tool, the Texas A&M tool allows producers to analyze payment yield updates and expected payments for 2021. Producers who have used the tool in the past should see their username and much of their farm data already available in the system.

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.

For additional questions and assistance, contact your local USDA service center. To locate your local FSA office, visit farmers.gov/service-locator.

USDA Announces Changes to Emergency Haying and Grazing Provisions

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) today announced changes for emergency haying and grazing use of acres enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). This includes changes outlined in the 2018 Farm Bill that streamlines the authorization process for farmers and ranchers.

Drought conditions are tough for our livestock producers, but emergency haying and grazing use of Conservation Reserve Program acres provides temporary relief to these producers. Thanks to a streamlined authorization process, Wyoming producers will be able to more quickly obtain emergency use approval to begin emergency haying or grazing of CRP acres.

Program Changes

Previously emergency haying and grazing requests originated with FSA at the county level and required state and national level approval. Now approval will be based on drought severity as determined by the U.S. Drought Monitor.

To date, 21 counties in Wyoming have triggered eligibility for emergency haying and grazing on CRP acres. A list by state and map of eligible counties are updated weekly and available on FSA's website.

Producers located in a county that is designated as severe drought (D2) or greater on or after the last day of the primary nesting season are eligible for emergency haying and grazing on all eligible acres. Additionally, producers located in counties that were in a severe drought (D2) status any single week during the last eight weeks of the primary nesting season may also be eligible for emergency haying and grazing unless the FSA County Committee determines that forage conditions no longer warrant emergency haying and grazing.

Counties that trigger for Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) payments based on the U.S. Drought Monitor may hay only certain practices on less than 50% of eligible contract acres. Producers should contact their local FSA county office for eligible CRP practices.

Producers who don't meet the drought monitor qualifications but have a 40% loss of forage production may also be eligible for emergency haying and grazing outside of the primary nesting season.

CRP Emergency Haying and Grazing Provisions

Before haying or grazing eligible acres, producers must submit a request for CRP emergency haying or grazing to FSA and obtain a modified conservation plan from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Emergency grazing is authorized for up to 90 days and emergency haying is authorized for up to 60 days. Program participants must stop haying and grazing 30 days before the first freeze date in the fall based on the dates established for LFP.

Under the emergency grazing provisions, producers can use the CRP acreage for their own livestock or may grant another livestock producer use of the CRP acreage. The eligible CRP acreage is limited to acres located within the approved county.

For emergency haying, producers are limited to one cutting and are permitted to sell the hay. Participants must remove all hay from CRP acreage within 15 days after baling and remove all livestock from CRP acreage no later than 1 day after the end of the emergency grazing period. There will be no CRP annual rental payment reduction for emergency haying and grazing authorizations.

More Information

For more information on CRP emergency haying and grazing visit fsa.usda.gov/crp or contact your FSA county office. To locate your FSA office, visit farmers.gov/service-locator. For more disaster recovery assistance programs, visit farmers.gov/recover.

Ask USDA available to answer questions about FSA programs

Ask USDA is now available as a tool for FSA customers to ask questions about FSA programs and services.

Ask USDA, available at ask.usda.gov is similar to AskFSA, which was decommissioned Sept. 21, but it also provides information for all USDA programs. Ask USDA allows USDA customers to search for and read answers about FSA programs and services in the same location as they read about other USDA programs and services.

Customers are able to submit questions through email, chat, and phone if they need more information. This improved customer service approach further builds on Secretary Sonny Perdue's OneUSDA vison and provides the customer a one-stop shopping experience that covers all of USDA's many programs.

Borrower Training for Farm Loan Customers

Borrower training is available for all Farm Service Agency (FSA) customers. This training is required for all direct loan applicants, unless the applicant has a waiver issued by the agency.

Borrower training includes instruction in production and financial management. The purpose is to help the applicants develop and improve skills that are necessary to successfully operate a farm and build equity in the operation. It aims to help the producer become financially successful. Borrower training is provided, for a fee, by agency approved vendors. Contact your local FSA Farm Loan Manager for a list of approved vendors.

FSA Offers Loan Servicing Options

There are options for Farm Service Agency (FSA) loan customers during financial stress. If you are a borrower who is unable to make payments on a loan, contact your local FSA Farm Loan Manager to learn about your options.

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).