Crook County Farm Service Agency is Accepting Emergency Conservation Program Applications

Disaster Assistance for 2021 Livestock Forage Losses

Report Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) Losses

Maintaining Good Credit History

**Crook County Farm Service Agency is Accepting Emergency Conservation Program Applications**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) in Crook County is accepting applications for the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) to address damages from drought. ECP signup will begin on Monday, July 26, 2021, and end on August 24, 2021.

The approved ECP practices under this authorization include:
- Well drilling, water tanks, spring development, pipeline due to Drought.

ECP assists producers with the recovery cost to restore the farmland to pre-disaster conditions. Approved ECP applicants may receive up to 75 percent of the cost of approved restoration activity. Limited resource, socially disadvantaged, excluding gender, and beginning farmers and ranchers may receive up to 90 percent cost-share.

Producers with damage from such events must apply for assistance prior to beginning reconstructive work. FSA’s National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and environmental compliance review process is required to be completed before any actions are taken. Submitting an application after reconstructive work has been completed may not qualify for ECP.

FSA county committees will evaluate applications based on an on-site inspection of the damaged land, taking into consideration the type and extent of the damage. An on-site inspection does not guarantee that cost-share funding will be provided.

The 2018 Farm Bill increased the payment limitation for ECP to $500,000 per disaster. The use of ECP funds is limited to activities to return the land to the relative pre-disaster condition. Conservation concerns that were present on the land prior to the disaster are not eligible for ECP assistance.

Please call the office at 307-283-2870 to schedule your appointment to file an application. It is important to note that you will have to come into the office to complete and sign your ECP application; as the walkthroughs with NRCS are preliminary only in nature and not a determination of your approval on your project.

For more information on ECP, please contact the Crook County FSA office at 307-283-2870 or visit farmers.gov/recover.

**Disaster Assistance for 2021 Livestock Forage Losses**
Producers in Crook County are eligible to apply for **2021 Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP)** benefits on native and/or improved pasture due to D3, extreme drought intensity as per the U.S. Drought Monitor.

LFP provides compensation if you suffer grazing losses for covered livestock due to drought on privately owned or cash leased land or fire on federally managed land. Eligible livestock are grazing animals that satisfy the majority of net energy requirement of nutrition via grazing of forage grasses or legumes.

Eligible Livestock must:

- Have been owned, leased, purchased, entered into a contract to purchase, or held by a contract grower during the 60 days prior to the beginning date (**beginning inventory date is June 8, 2021**) of a qualifying drought or fire condition;
- Have been sold or otherwise disposed of due to a qualifying drought condition during the current production year or one or both of the two production years immediately preceding the current production year;
- Have been maintained for commercial use as part of a farming operation on the beginning date of the eligible drought or fire condition;
- Not have been produced and maintained for reasons other than commercial use as part of a farming operation (such excluded uses include, but are not limited to, wild free-roaming animals or animals used for recreational purposes such as pleasure, hunting, pets, roping or for show); and
- Not have been livestock that were or would have been in a feedlot on the beginning date of the qualifying drought or fire as part of the normal business operation of the livestock owner or contract grower.

FSA will calculate LFP payments for an eligible livestock producer for grazing losses because of a qualifying drought equal to payment factors of one, three, four or five times the LFP monthly payment rate. The LFP monthly payment rate for drought is equal to **60 percent of the lesser** of either the monthly feed cost:

- For all covered livestock owned or leased by the eligible livestock producer; or
- Calculated by using the normal carrying capacity of the eligible grazing land of the eligible livestock producer

You must complete a CCC-853 and the required supporting documentation no later than January 31, 2022, for 2021 losses. Supporting documents must show evidence of loss and that grazing land or pastureland is owned or leased.

For additional information about LFP, including eligible livestock, please contact the Crook County FSA office at **307-283-2870** or visit [fsa.usda.gov](http://fsa.usda.gov).

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**Report Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) Losses**

NAP provides financial assistance to you for crops that aren’t eligible for crop insurance to protect against lower yields or crops unable to be planted due to natural disasters including freeze, hail, excessive moisture, excessive wind or hurricanes, flood, excessive heat and qualifying drought (includes native grass for grazing), among others.

To receive payment, you had to purchase NAP coverage for 2021 crops and file a notice of loss the earlier of 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent or 15 days of the final harvest date.

For hand-harvested crops and certain perishable crops, you must notify FSA within 72 hours of when a loss becomes apparent.
Eligible crops must be commercially produced agricultural commodities for which crop insurance is not available, including perennial grass forage and grazing crops, fruits, vegetables, mushrooms, floriculture, ornamental nursery, aquaculture, turf grass, ginseng, honey, syrup, bioenergy, and industrial crops.

For more information on NAP, please contact the **Crook County FSA office** at **307-283-2870** or visit [fsa.usda.gov/nap](http://fsa.usda.gov/nap).

### Maintaining Good Credit History

Farm Service Agency (FSA) loans require applicants to have a satisfactory credit history. A credit report is requested for all FSA direct farm loan applicants. These reports are reviewed to verify outstanding debts, see if bills are paid timely and to determine the impact on cash flow.

Information on your credit report is strictly confidential and is used only as an aid in conducting FSA business.

Our farm loan staff will discuss options with you if you have an unfavorable credit report and will provide a copy of your report. If you dispute the accuracy of the information on the credit report, it is up to you to contact the issuing credit report company to resolve any errors or inaccuracies.

There are multiple ways to remedy an unfavorable credit score:

- Make sure to pay bills on time
  - Setting up automatic payments or automated reminders can be an effective way to remember payment due dates.
- Pay down existing debt
- Keep your credit card balances low
- Avoid suddenly opening or closing existing credit accounts

FSA’s farm loan staff will guide you through the process, which may require you to reapply for a loan after improving or correcting your credit report.

For more information on FSA farm loan programs, please contact the **Crook County FSA office** at **307-283-2870** or visit [fsa.usda.gov](http://fsa.usda.gov).

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**USDA Service Center**

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Next Scheduled COC Meeting
TBD