FSA CED Updates & A Few Jokes

We in the FSA can’t believe it is already the Holiday season and we’re approaching the end of the year. We wish you all a fantastic Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas. We have a lot of updates below.

**New Program Technician** - We were able to officially welcome Kate Jackson into a permanent Program Technician role recently. She had been working with us over the last year in a temporary role. Kate and her family have a ranch in the Chugwater area. We are all very pleased to have Kate with us permanently. She is handling the livestock disaster programs as well as payment eligibility & limitation, and acreage reporting. Feel free to stop by and visit with Kate and welcome her to the office!

**COVID/ Locked Doors** - This is a constantly updating situation. Having our doors open or closed is tied to the weekly trend in county COVID cases. If you have questions about the doors being open during your visit, please call ahead and we will let you know the current regulations set by Homeland Security for our Service Center.

**New Software Available to Electronically Sign Documents** - We have new software allowing producers to sign documents electronically from anywhere, eliminating a trip to town. Please read the article in this bulletin for details & request it for your next documents!

**ARC/PLC** - It is again time to think about ARC/PLC enrollment. With Goshen’s 600-plus contracts to complete annually, this program is a massive undertaking. Please contact us if you have questions about your program election or would like to change your election for 2022. All contracts are due back on March 15, 2022 with all signatures.

**ELAP** - You may have heard about the recent update to ELAP. We are now able to pay for trucking of hay/forages/other feedstuffs (including salt and minerals). We recently received the regulations & application for ELAP. Payment rates are 60% of $6.60 per mile, with no payment earned on freight for the first 25 miles or over 1,000 miles. Please contact Kate for more details on ELAP and for an application. Additionally, please gather any documentation you have for any trucking/hauling for forage purchased in your operation.

**Farm Records/Acreage Reporting** - We are editing farm records and maps in preparation for spring/summer acreage reporting. If you have maps needing edits (a pivot has been put in, land has been bought or sold, fields drawn out incorrectly…) please contact the office. We will make every effort to get these updated before acreage reporting this summer. This is an opportunity to update maps within your operation and make everything easier on everyone. Let us know what needs done!

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**Jokes**

What do you call a snowman with a six-pack? An abdominal snowman.

What are the best Christmas sweaters made from? Fleece Navidad.

Who is Santa’s favorite singer? Elf-is Presley.

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Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in FSA meetings should contact Courtney Yelton at 307-532-4880, extension 2, or Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.
Enrollment Begins for Agriculture Risk Coverage & Price Loss Coverage Programs for 2022

Agricultural producers can now make elections and enroll in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for the 2022 crop year. These key U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) safety-net programs help producers weather fluctuations in either revenue or price for certain crops.

Enrollment for the 2022 crop year closes March 15, 2022.

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, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium and short grain rice, safflower seed, seed cotton, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat.

2022 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 2022 crop year. Although election changes for 2022 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 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 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.

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 2022. 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](#).

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**USDA Offers Options for Signing and Sharing Documents Online**

Farmers and ranchers working with USDA’s Farm Service Agency or Natural Resources Conservation Service can now sign and share documents online in just a few clicks. By using Box or OneSpan, producers can digitally complete business transactions without leaving their homes or agricultural operations. Both services are free, secure, and available for multiple FSA and NRCS programs.

Box is a secure, cloud-based site where FSA or NRCS documents can be managed and shared. Producers who choose to use Box can create a username and password to access their secure Box account, where documents can be downloaded, printed, manually signed, scanned, uploaded, and shared digitally with Service Center staff. This service is available to any FSA or NRCS customer with access to a mobile device or computer with printer connectivity.

OneSpan is a secure eSignature solution for FSA and NRCS customers. Like Box, no software downloads or eAuthentication is required for OneSpan. Instead, producers interested in eSignature through OneSpan can confirm their identity through two-factor authentication using a verification code sent to their mobile device or a personalized question and answer. Once identity is confirmed, documents can be reviewed and e-signed through OneSpan via the producer's personal email address. Signed documents immediately become available to the appropriate Service Center staff.

Box and OneSpan are both optional services for customers interested in improved efficiency in signing and sharing documents with USDA, and they do not replace existing systems using eAuthentication for digital signature. Instead, these tools provide additional digital options for producers to use when conducting business with FSA or NRCS.

USDA Service Center staff are available to help producers get started with Box and OneSpan through a few simple steps. Please visit [farmers.gov/service-locator](#) to find your local office and let Service Center staff know you're interested in signing and sharing documents through these new features. In most cases, one quick phone call will be all that is needed to initiate the process.

Visit [farmers.gov/mydocs](#) to learn more about Box and OneSpan, tips for getting started, and additional resources for conducting business with USDA online. To learn more about program flexibilities and Service Center status during the coronavirus pandemic, visit [farmers.gov/coronavirus](#).

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**Applying for Beginning Farmer Loans**

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) assists beginning farmers to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these designated farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

- Has operated a farm for not more than 10 years
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm
- Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA
- Does not own a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county’s average size farm.

For more information contact, contact the Platte County USDA Service Center at 307-322-4050 or visit [fsa.usda.gov](#).
USDA Expands Assistance to Cover Feed Transportation Costs for Drought-Impacted Ranchers

In response to the severe drought conditions in the West and Great Plains, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced today its plans to help cover the cost of transporting feed for livestock that rely on grazing. USDA is updating the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) to immediately cover feed transportation costs for drought impacted ranchers. USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) will provide more details and tools to help ranchers get ready to apply at their local USDA Service Center later this month at fsa.usda.gov/elap

ELAP provides financial assistance to eligible producers of livestock, honeybees, and farm-raised fish for losses due to disease, certain adverse weather events or loss conditions as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture.

ELAP already covers the cost of hauling water during drought, and this change will expand the program beginning in 2021 to cover feed transportation costs where grazing and hay resources have been depleted. This includes places where:

- Drought intensity is D2 for eight consecutive weeks as indicated by the U.S. Drought Monitor;
- Drought intensity is D3 or greater; or
- USDA has determined a shortage of local or regional feed availability.

Cost share assistance will also be made available to cover eligible cost of treating hay or feed to prevent the spread of invasive pests like fire ants.

Under the revised policy for feed transportation cost assistance, eligible ranchers will be reimbursed 60% of feed transportation costs above what would have been incurred in a normal year. Producers qualifying as underserved (socially disadvantaged, limited resource, beginning or military veteran) will be reimbursed for 90% of the feed transportation cost above what would have been incurred in a normal year.

A national cost formula, as established by USDA, will be used to determine reimbursement costs which will not include the first 25 miles and distances exceeding 1,000 transportation miles. The calculation will also exclude the normal cost to transport hay or feed if the producer normally purchases some feed. For 2021, the initial cost formula of $6.60 per mile will be used (before the percentage is applied), but may be adjusted on a state or regional basis.

To be eligible for ELAP assistance, livestock must be intended for grazing and producers must have incurred feed transportation costs on or after Jan. 1, 2021. Although producers will self-certify losses and expenses to FSA, producers are encouraged to maintain good records and retain receipts and related documentation in the event these documents are requested for review by the local FSA County Committee. The deadline to file an application for payment for the 2021 program year is Jan. 31, 2022.

USDA offers a comprehensive portfolio of disaster assistance programs. On farmers.gov, the Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool, Disaster Assistance-at-a-Glance fact sheet, and Farm Loan Discovery Tool can help producers and landowners determine all program or loan options available for disaster recovery assistance. More information on this expansion to ELAP is forthcoming. In the meantime, more information is available at fsa.usda.gov/elap or by contacting a local USDA Service Center.

Disaster Assistance for 2021 Livestock Forage Losses

Producers in Goshen County are eligible to apply for 2021 Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) benefits on native pasture and improved pasture.

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.

You must complete a CCC-853 and the required supporting documentation no later than January 31, 2022, for 2021 losses.

For additional information about LFP, including eligible livestock and fire criteria, contact the Goshen County USDA Service Center at 307-532-4880 ext 2, or visit fsa.usda.gov.

TRIVIA CONTEST ABOUT OUR STAFF!

The first 3 producers who can correctly match the facts with the correct staff members win one dozen gourmet cookies or muffins of their choice, fancy enough for your Christmas party! Each fact is about a different staffer. Write down/email your answers and submit them to Goshen County FSA. Limit one submission per producer per week.

Staff:

1. Survived a hot air balloon crash
2. Once worked as a medical & legal transcriptionist
3. Once worked in a bicycle shop
4. Former restaurant and bar owner
MARKETING ASSISTANCE LOANS (MAL’s)

MALs provide financing and marketing assistance for wheat, feed grains, soybeans, and other oilseeds, pulse crops, rice, peanuts, cotton, wool and honey. MALs provide you with interim financing after harvest to help you meet cash flow needs without having to sell your commodities when market prices are typically at harvest-time lows.

- November interest rate: 1.125%
- 9 month loan period
- Farm stored or elevator stored commodities
- Your crop is your collateral
- Feeding to livestock? Easy pay as you feed options!

Goshen County Loan Rates:
- Corn: $2.32/bushel
- Hard Red Winter Wheat: $2.93/bushel

Visit farmers.gov Commodity Loans for other eligible crops and loan rates, or call Jennifer at the Goshen County FSA (307) 532-4880, ext 2.

Important Dates & Deadlines

December 1: NAP Insurance Deadline for all perennial grasses, alfalfa, clover, mixed forage, and honey
December 6: COC Election Ballots for District 3 Due/Postmarked
December 13: COC Meeting
December 24: Office Closed in Observance of Christmas Holiday
December 31: Office Closed in Observance of New Year’s Holiday
January 31: Livestock Forage Program Application Deadline
March 15: ARC/PLC Deadline

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).