Disaster Assistance for 2021 Livestock Forage Losses

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

County committees can only accept LFP applications after notification is received by the National Office of qualifying drought or if a federal agency prohibits producers from grazing normal permitted livestock on federally managed lands due to qualifying fire. You must complete a CCC-853 and the required supporting documentation no later than January 30, 2022, for 2021 losses.

For additional information about LFP, including eligible livestock and fire criteria, contact the Natrona County USDA Service Center at 307-261-5436 or visit fsa.usda.gov.

ELAP Covers Losses from Additional Cost of Transporting Water to Livestock

If you’ve incurred additional operating costs for transporting water to livestock due to an eligible drought, assistance may be available to you through the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP).

An eligible drought means that part or all of your county is designated D3 (extreme drought) or higher as indicated by the U.S. Drought Monitor.

Eligible livestock must be adult or non-adult dairy cattle, beef cattle, buffalo and beefalo, as well as alpacas, deer, elk, emus, equine, goats, llamas, reindeer, or sheep. Additionally, the livestock must have been owned 60 calendar days prior to the beginning of the drought and be physically located in the county designated as a disaster area due to drought. Adequate livestock watering systems or facilities must have existed before the drought occurred and producers are only eligible if they do not normally transport water to the livestock.

Livestock that were or would have been in a feedlot are not eligible for transporting water. ELAP covers the additional cost of transporting water and does not cover the cost of the water itself.

You must file a notice of loss on form CCC-851 the earlier of 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent to you or by Jan. 30, 2022. Additionally, the deadline to submit an application for payment for 2021 ELAP assistance is Jan. 30, 2022.
You’ll have to provide documentation to FSA that shows the method used to transport the water, the number of gallons of water transported and the number of eligible livestock to which water was transported.

To make an appointment to sign up for ELAP and to learn more about eligibility, application and documentation requirements, contact your Natrona County USDA Service Center at 307-261-5436 or visit fsa.usda.gov.

5 Million Acres in Conservation Easements

NRCS has reached an impressive new milestone: enough acres in easements to fill the state of New Jersey. The 5 million acres have been enrolled across all the conservation easement programs offered by NRCS over the past 28 years.

Farmers, ranchers, and private landowners who enroll their acres in conservation easements ensure protection of sensitive lands, support wildlife, and confront challenges like climate change.

Currently, NRCS offers conservation easements through the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP), which helps landowners, land trusts, and other entities protect, restore, and enhance wetlands, grasslands, and working farms and ranches through conservation easements.

By the Numbers

- 5 Million acres enrolled in conservation easements
- 2.8 Million acres in wetland easements
- 1.9 Million acres in agricultural easements, including grassland easements
- 110,000 acres enrolled in FY 2021
- 28 years of conservation easements.

Enrolling in Easements

Farmers, ranchers, and private foresters looking to enroll farmland, grasslands, or wetlands in a conservation easement may submit proposals to the NRCS state office to acquire conservation easements on eligible land. To enroll land through wetland reserve easements, landowners should contact their local USDA Service Center.

USDA offers a variety of conservation programs that provide help to plan and implement conservation practices on farms, ranches or forests. Learn more about putting conservation to work through our Conservation at Work video series.

Applying for Youth Loans

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) makes loans to youth to establish and operate agricultural income-producing projects in connection with 4-H clubs, FFA and other agricultural groups. Projects must be planned and operated with the help of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is $5,000.

Youth Loan Eligibility Requirements:

1. Be a citizen of the United States (which includes Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) or a legal resident alien
2. Be 10 years to 20 years of age
3. Comply with FSA’s general eligibility requirements
4. Be unable to get a loan from other sources
5. Conduct a modest income-producing project in a supervised program of work as outlined above.

6. Demonstrate capability of planning, managing and operating the project under guidance and assistance from a project advisor. The project supervisor must recommend the youth loan applicant, along with providing adequate supervision.

For help preparing the application forms, contact your Platte County USDA Service Center at 307-322-4050 or visit fsa.usda.gov.