Greetings Niobrara County Farmers and Ranchers!

As we continue to endure restrictions due to COVID, please remember that while we aren’t open to the public for in-office business, we are here and available via telephone or email, so please feel free to call us if there’s anything we can assist you with.

For anyone who applied for CFAP 1 or CFAP 2 benefits—additional funds were appropriated in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 in December 2020. A few noteworthy highlights are that cattle producers will be receiving additional payments based on the livestock claimed on approved CFAP 1 applications. The following chart shows the payment rates that will be issued for cattle:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Eligible Commodity</th>
<th>Payment Rate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feeder Cattle: Less than 600 lbs (including 2020 born baby calves)</td>
<td>$7.00/head</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feeder Cattle: 600 lbs or more (Yearling feeder/grass calves)</td>
<td>$25.50/head</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slaughter Cattle: Fed Cattle (Fat cattle)</td>
<td>$63.00/head</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slaughter Cattle: Mature Cattle (Drys, Cull/Killer cows or bulls)</td>
<td>$14.75/head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Other Cattle (Cows, First Calf Heifers, Replacement Heifers, Bulls)</td>
<td>$17.25/head</td>
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</table>

In addition, crop producers with crops such as barley, corn, sorghum, wheat, alfalfa, millet, oats, rye or triticale on approved CFAP 2 applications will also be receiving additional payments of $20/acre. **No action needs to be taken for either of these updates!**

One other important note is that the CFAP 2 application period will be re-opening again on April 5, 2021 for anyone who did not apply during the original signup period. If you did not apply for CFAP 2 benefits already, and wish to, please contact the Niobrara County FSA Office. There are many other updates to the CFAP programs, please visit [www.farmers.gov/cfap](http://www.farmers.gov/cfap) for more information.

We hope that everyone made it through the recent snow storms relatively well. If you did encounter any problems, please be sure to notify us so that we can assist you in any way possible. Primarily, if you lost any livestock due to weather conditions, those losses could be eligible for the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP). Any losses need to be reported to the office within 30 days of becoming apparent to you.

As we get closer to spring, please remember that the acreage reporting deadline for 2021 is July 15, 2021, but as you begin seeding crops this spring, please be sure to notify the office once you’ve completed your spring planting so that a revised acreage report can be filed.

Please remember the importance of keeping the office up to date on all changes to your operation. This includes changes in operation of land, bank account changes, membership changes to your entity, to name a few. Keeping us informed will prevent any future delays in program benefits. Happy Spring!  

- Niobrara County FSA Staff
The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) provides assistance to you for livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality caused by adverse weather, disease and attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the federal government or protected by federal law.

For disease losses, FSA county committees can accept veterinarian certifications that livestock deaths were directly related to adverse weather and unpreventable through good animal husbandry and management.

For 2021 livestock losses, you must file a notice within 30 calendar days of when the loss is first apparent.

You then must provide the following supporting documentation to your local FSA office no later than 60 calendar days after the end of the calendar year in which the eligible loss condition occurred.

- Proof of death documentation
- Copy of grower’s contracts
- Proof of normal mortality documentation

USDA has established normal mortality rates for each type and weight range of eligible livestock, i.e. Adult Beef Cow = 2% and Non-Adult Beef Cattle (less than 250 pounds) = 4.3%. These established percentages reflect losses that are considered expected or typical under “normal” conditions.

In addition to filing a notice of loss, you must also submit an application for payment by March 1, 2022.

For more information, contact the Niobrara County USDA Service Center at 307-334-2953, Ext. 2 or visit fsa.usda.gov.

FSA needs to keep records updated at all times. If you have had any of the following changes, please report them to our office so we can update our records accordingly:

- Individual or business names, phone numbers or addresses, shares or membership changes to entities, deeding land into a trust, sold or purchased property, added or dropped leased land.

If you raise sheep in Niobrara County, you may be eligible for loan deficiency payments (LDPs) from the USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA).

LDPs and marketing assistance loans (MALs) are marketing tools that are available during or after shearing.

MALs help producers meet cash flow needs without selling commodities when market prices are at harvest-time lows. Producers who are eligible for marketing loans, but choose to forgo the loan, are eligible for LDPs if the posted county price falls below the county loan rate.

Producers can purchase a commodity certificate that may be exchanged for the outstanding loan collateral. Daily LDP rates are available online at fsa.usda.gov.

Rules related to payment limitations, actively engaged in farming and cash-rent tenant no longer apply to LDPs.

For more information, contact your Niobrara County USDA Service Center at 307-334-2953, Ext. 2 or visit fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) announces that farmers and ranchers in Wyoming now can receive notifications thru email. To receive GovDelivery email notifications, subscribe online at www.fsa.usda.gov/subscribe or contact the Niobrara County FSA office for subscription assistance. Producers can establish subscriber preferences by choosing to receive federal farm program information by topic, by state or by county. Producers can select as many subscriber options as they want, which allows producers who farm in multiple counties or across state lines to receive updates from each county in which they operate or have an interest.
**USDA EXTENDS GENERAL SIGNUP FOR CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM**

The USDA is extending the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) General Signup period, which had previously been announced as ending on Feb. 12, 2021. USDA will continue to accept offers as it takes this opportunity for the incoming Administration to evaluate ways to increase enrollment.

Under the previous Administration, incentives and rental payment rates were reduced resulting in an enrollment shortfall of over 4 million acres. The program, administered by USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA), provides annual rental payments for 10 to 15 years for land devoted to conservation purposes, as well as other types of payments.

Before the General CRP Signup period ends, producers will have the opportunity to adjust or resubmit their offers to take advantage of planned improvements to the program.

This signup for CRP gives producers an opportunity to enroll land for the first time or re-enroll land under existing contracts that will be expiring Sept. 30, 2021.

All interested producers, including those on Indian reservations and with trust lands, are encouraged to contact their local USDA Service Center for more information.

**BREAKING OUT NEW GROUND**

Landowners and operators are reminded that in order to receive payments from USDA, compliance with Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions are required. Farmers with HEL determined soils are reminded of tillage, crop residue, and rotation requirements as specified per their conservation plan. Producers are to notify the USDA Farm Service Agency prior to conducting land clearing or drainage projects to insure compliance. Failure to obtain advance approval for any of these situations can result in the loss of eligibility and all Federal payments.

**USDA OFFERS TARGETED FARM LOAN FUNDING FOR UNDERSERVED GROUPS AND BEGINNING FARMERS and RANCHERS**

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds producers that FSA offers targeted farm ownership and farm operating loans to assist underserved applicants and beginning farmers and ranchers.

USDA defines underserved applicants as a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice because of their identity as members of the group without regard to their individual qualities. For farm loan program purposes, targeted underserved groups are women, African Americans, American Indians and Alaskan Natives, Hispanics and Asians and Pacific Islanders.

Underserved or beginning farmers and ranchers who cannot obtain commercial credit from a bank can apply for either FSA direct loans or guaranteed loans. Direct loans are made to applicants by FSA. Guaranteed loans are made by lending institutions who arrange for FSA to guarantee the loan. FSA can guarantee up to 95 percent of the loss of principal and interest on a loan. The FSA guarantee allows lenders to make agricultural credit available to producers who do not meet the lender’s normal underwriting criteria.

The direct and guaranteed loan program provides for two types of loans: farm ownership loans and farm operating loans. In addition to customary farm operating and ownership loans, FSA offers Microloans through the direct loan program. Microloans focus on the financing needs of small, beginning farmer, niche, and non-traditional farm operations. Microloans are available for both ownership and operating finance needs. To learn more about microloans, visit [fsa.usda.gov/microloans](http://fsa.usda.gov/microloans).

To qualify as a beginning producer, the individual or entity must meet the eligibility requirements outlined for direct or guaranteed loans. Individuals and all entity members must have operated a farm for less than 10 years. Applicants must materially or substantially participate in the operation.

For more information on FSA’s farm loan programs and targeted underserved and beginning farmer guidelines, contact your Platte County USDA Service Center at 307-322-4050 or visit [fsa.usda.gov/farmloans](http://fsa.usda.gov/farmloans).
In accordance with Federal civil rights laws and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA’s TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at

http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, *--or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the form call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
   Office of the Assistant Secretary of Civil Rights
   1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
   Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
fax to (202) 690-7442
e-mail at program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.