CED Comments, Upcoming Deadlines, and a Joke or Two

We hope you have been enjoying these few warm days to get some calves on the ground safely and get a few jobs around the farm done!

ARC/PLC- Contracts have been run and sent out. If you haven't received yours, please contact the office. Please, watch for the different names and do not sign for another producer. We have had several returned that are signing for all producers on the contract. If you would like to change the program election or shares or are missing a farm, please contact the office.

CRP- CRP Signup 58 is in full swing. Our new maximum rate is $32/acre, however we are seeing most offers come up in the mid to high $20's. Please contact Jennifer if you wish to put in an offer. Time is running out to apply! The deadline is March 11, 2022.

LIP-Be sure to keep those calving books up to date as we approach and start calving season. Any livestock deaths due to extreme cold, blizzard, or winter storm may be eligible for benefits under LIP. Documentation is key! Include date of birth, date of death, and any applicable information about your management activities completed to keep the calves alive. Pictures of the dead animals, while very unpleasant, are an incredible asset in getting applications approved.

Upcoming Dates/Deadlines
Mar. 11- CRP General Signup Closes
Mar. 15- ARC/PLC Signup Deadline
Mar. 15- NAP Application for Coverage Deadline for Hemp
Apr. 4- CRP Grasslands Signup Scheduled to Open

Jokes
A guy tried to sell me illegal bees to make free honey. I said no because I knew it was a sting operation.

What career does a spider have? Web design.

My buddy just got a job in marketing with Kellogg's cereals. I guess you could say his job is Raisin Bran awareness.

Applying for Farm Storage Facility Loans

The Farm Service Agency’s (FSA) Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program provides low-interest financing to help you build or upgrade storage facilities and to purchase portable (new or used) structures, equipment and storage and handling trucks.

Eligible commodities include corn, grain sorghum, rice, soybeans, oats, peanuts, wheat, barley, minor oilseeds harvested as whole grain, pulse crops (lentils, chickpeas and dry peas), hay, honey, renewable biomass, fruits, nuts and vegetables for cold storage facilities, floriculture, hops, maple sap, rye, milk, cheese, butter, yogurt, meat and poultry (unprocessed), eggs, and aquaculture (excluding...
systems that maintain live animals through uptake and discharge of water). Qualified facilities include grain bins, hay barns and cold storage facilities for eligible commodities.

Loans up to $50,000 can be secured by a promissory note/security agreement, loans between $50,000 and $100,000 may require additional security, and loans exceeding $100,000 require additional security.

You do not need to demonstrate the lack of commercial credit availability to apply. The loans are designed to assist a diverse range of farming operations, including small and mid-sized businesses, new farmers, operations supplying local food and farmers markets, non-traditional farm products, and underserved producers.

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**Farmers.gov Feature Helps Producers Find Farm Loans that Fit Their Operation**

Farmers and ranchers can use the *Farm Loan Discovery Tool* on farmers.gov to find information on USDA farm loans that may best fit their operations.

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers a variety of loan options to help farmers finance their operations. From buying land to financing the purchase of equipment, FSA loans can help.

USDA conducted field research in eight states, gathering input from farmers and FSA farm loan staff to better understand their needs and challenges.

**How the Tool Works**

Farmers who are looking for financing options to operate a farm or buy land can answer a few simple questions about what they are looking to fund and how much money they need to borrow. After submitting their answers, farmers will receive information on farm loans that best fit their specific needs. The loan application and additional resources also will be provided.

Farmers can download application quick guides that outline what to expect from preparing an application to receiving a loan decision. There are four guides that cover loans to individuals, entities, and youth, as well as information on microloans. The guides include general eligibility requirements and a list of required forms and documentation for each type of loan. These guides can help farmers prepare before their first USDA service center visit with a loan officer.

Farmers can access the *Farm Loan Discovery Tool* by visiting farmers.gov/fund and clicking the “Start” button. Follow the prompts and answer five simple questions to receive loan information that is applicable to your agricultural operation. The tool is built to run on any modern browser like Chrome, Edge, Firefox, or the Safari browser, and is fully functional on mobile devices. It does not work in Internet Explorer.

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**Making Your Land More Resilient to Drought**

Now that the 2021 crop year has ended, it is time to start planning for 2022 and beyond. Many farmers and ranchers west of the Mississippi River have had a very difficult year in 2021 due to drought. Those in other areas of the country were spared from the worst of the drought this time but may not be as lucky in future years. So, as you’re planning for 2022 production, you may want to consider some conservation practices that can help make your land and livestock more resilient to drought and help your bottom line.

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service can help you conserve water and build resilience to drought, through conservation practices that improve irrigation efficiency, boost soil health, and manage grazing lands.

**Irrigation Efficiency**

USDA helps you improve your irrigation efficiency to ensure each drop of water is used wisely. Saving water on your farm can help during drought and can offset rising water costs; reduce expenditures for energy, chemicals, and labor; and enhance revenues through higher crop yields and improved crop quality. Funded conservation practices include conversion to more efficient irrigation systems, such as micro-irrigation or subsurface drip irrigation, installation of irrigation pipeline, irrigation water management, structures for water control, and flow
meters. Tools like drip irrigation, which provides water precisely where and when it’s needed, can achieve greater precision with flow meters and soil moisture sensors.

**Soil Health**

In addition, soil health conservation practices, such as reduced- or no-till, cover crops, mulching and residue management can help to make your soil, and the plants you grow or animals you raise, healthier. Healthier soil can absorb and retain more water for longer periods of time, making your farm or ranch more resilient to drought. Using soil health practices, you can conserve water by increasing your soil’s water-holding capacity and use conservation tillage to keep the ground covered, reducing water loss through transpiration and evaporation.

And soil health practices increase organic matter, and each pound of organic matter can hold up to 20 pounds of water. Every 1% increase in organic matter results in as much as 25,000 gallons of soil water per acre. Each 1% increase in organic matter can also provide up to 30 pounds of more available nitrogen per acre. That means less money and time spent on inputs like water and fertilizer, which make your operation more profitable.

**Rotational/Prescribed Grazing, Water Sources for Livestock**

Drought also impacts grazing lands, and NRCS works with you to increase the resilience of your livestock operation. Ranchers can adapt to dry conditions in two main ways: increasing the availability and suitability of forage and ensuring that cattle have an adequate and reliable source of water. For forage, rotational or prescribed grazing (rotating cattle among pastures) can relieve pressure on stressed vegetation and ensure a more consistent supply of forage for animals. NRCS conservationists can also work with you to plant more drought-tolerant forage species, plants best suited to local soils and conditions. For reliable sources of water, NRCS can help you with installing watering facilities, water wells, or water pipeline for livestock. Having available forage and water for livestock can make a big difference in difficult drought conditions.

USDA and NRCS are here for you, helping you recover from drought and prepare for the next one. For more information on drought recovery assistance at [https://www.farmers.gov/protection-recovery/drought#recovery](https://www.farmers.gov/protection-recovery/drought#recovery). For more information on conservation practices to make your operation more resilient to drought in future years, go to [www.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov).