



- [Niobrara County Updates](#)
- [Rolling Out Revenue Based Disaster and Pandemic Assistance Programs](#)
- [Farmers Can Now Make 2023 Crop Year Elections, Enroll in Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage Programs](#)
- [USDA Offers Options for Signing and Sharing Documents Online](#)
- [Applying for Beginning Farmer Loans](#)

## Niobrara County Updates

Greetings Niobrara County Farmers and Ranchers!

We really have winter upon us now! Hope you all are managing through the snow. We have high hopes that this will provide some much-needed moisture or at the very least, fill some ponds this spring!



Many of you have noticed some recent disbursements. The agency announced some additional payments to traditionally underserved producers (socially disadvantaged, beginning farmer/ranchers, etc) on the CFAP 2 applications already filed. If you belong to one of those categories and didn't receive a payment, it's likely on it's way, as the remainder just recently went out. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to call the office.

FSA is now accepting applications for the Emergency Revenue Program (ERP) and the Pandemic Assistance Revenue Program (PARP). Each program is revenue based and will rely on revenue data for each producer's application. Please see the articles below for more information.

We are closing in on the deadline to file 2023 ARC/PLC contracts, that deadline being March 15, 2023. We will be making contact with the producers who have yet to complete their 2023 contract to assist you in any way possible to complete this by the deadline.

The deadline to complete Livestock Forage Program (LFP) and Emergency Livestock Assistance Program (ELAP) applications is rapidly approaching, on January 30, 2023. If you sustained grazing losses due to drought, or have had additional transportation of either livestock or feed in 2022 due to drought, please contact the office as soon as possible to inquire about either of these programs before the deadline.

Also remember that the Livestock Indemnity Program is available if weather causes you any losses of livestock. Please be sure to notify the office within 30 days of becoming aware of a weather-related issue!

As always, please be sure to let the office know about any changes to your operation!

Please help reduce the burden on FSA staff by making an appointment prior to visiting the office, so that you can be prepared for your visit and we can be prepared for you as well. Thank you!

-Niobrara County FSA Staff

**Please note the following important dates and deadlines:**

January 30, 2023 – Deadline to file 2022 LFP or ELAP application

February 20, 2023 – OFFICE CLOSED – President's Day

March 1, 2023 – Deadline to file LIP application for 2022 losses

March 15, 2023 – Deadline to file 2023 ARC/PLC contracts

Within 15 days of noticing crop loss – File NAP Notice of Loss

Within 30 days of noticing livestock, pasture, or feed loss, or beginning additional feed, livestock, or water transportation due to drought – File LIP/ELAP Notice of Loss

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## Rolling Out Revenue Based Disaster and Pandemic Assistance Programs

Starting January 23, agricultural producers can begin to apply for two new important programs for revenue losses, from 2020 and 2021 natural disasters or the COVID-19 pandemic. Both programs equitably fill gaps in earlier assistance.

First, you may be eligible for assistance through the [Emergency Relief Program \(ERP\)](#) Phase Two if you experienced revenue losses from eligible natural disasters in 2020 and 2021. ERP Phase Two is for producers who didn't receive assistance from ERP Phase One.

You may also be eligible for the [Pandemic Assistance Revenue Program \(PARP\)](#) if you experienced revenue losses in calendar year 2020. PARP is addressing gaps in previous pandemic assistance, which was targeted at price loss or lack of market access, rather than overall revenue losses.

Applications for both new programs are due June 2, 2023, and you can apply for both programs during your same appointment with USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA).

Historically, FSA programs have been designed to make direct payments to producers based on a single disaster event or for a single commodity loss. For many of you, this may be the first revenue-based program that you've applied for with FSA.

### ***Why revenue-based programs?***

ERP Phase Two and PARP take a much more holistic approach to disaster assistance, ensuring that producers not just make it through a single growing season but have the financial stability to invest in the long-term well-being of their operations and employees.

In general, ERP Phase Two payments are based on the difference in allowable gross revenue between a benchmark year, representing a typical year of revenue for the producer and the disaster year – designed to target the remaining needs of producers impacted by qualifying natural disasters and avoid duplicative payments. ERP Phase Two revenue loss is based on tax years.

For PARP, an agricultural producer must have been in the business of farming during at least part of the 2020 calendar year and had a decrease in revenue for the 2020 calendar year, as compared to a typical year. PARP revenue loss is based on calendar years.

### ***How to Apply***

In preparation for enrollment, producers should gather supporting documentation including:

- Schedule F (Form 1040); and
- *Profit or Loss from Farming* or similar tax documents for tax years 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022 for ERP and for calendar years 2018, 2019 and 2020 for PARP.

Producers should also have, or be prepared to have, the following forms on file for both ERP and PARP program participation:

- Form AD-2047, *Customer Data Worksheet* (as applicable to the program participant);

- Form CCC-902, *Farm Operating Plan* for an individual or legal entity;
- Form CCC-901, *Member Information for Legal Entities* (if applicable); and
- Form AD-1026 *Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELC) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification*.
- Form CCC-860, *Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, Beginning and Veteran Farmer or Rancher Certification*, as certain existing permanent and ad-hoc disaster programs provide increased benefits or reduced fees and premiums.

Most producers, especially those who have previously participated in FSA programs, will likely have these required forms on file. However, those who are uncertain or want to confirm should contact FSA at their local [USDA Service Center](#).

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## Farmers Can Now Make 2023 Crop Year Elections, Enroll in Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage Programs

Agricultural producers can now change election and enroll in the [Agriculture Risk Coverage \(ARC\) and Price Loss Coverage](#) programs for the 2023 crop year, two key safety net programs offered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Signup began Oct. 17, 2022, and producers have until March 15, 2023, to enroll in these two programs. Additionally, USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) has started issuing payments totaling more than \$255 million to producers with 2021 crops that have triggered payments through ARC or PLC.

### 2023 Elections and Enrollment

Producers can elect coverage and enroll in ARC-County (ARC-CO) or PLC, which provide crop-by-crop protection, or ARC-Individual (ARC-IC), which protects the entire farm. Although election changes for 2023 are optional, producers must enroll through a signed contract each year. Also, if a producer has a multi-year contract on the farm and makes an election change for 2023, they must sign a new contract.

If producers do not submit their election by the March 15, 2023 deadline, their election remains the same as their 2022 election for crops on the farm. Farm owners cannot enroll in either program unless they have a share interest in the farm.

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.

### 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](#), a tool available through the University of Illinois allows producers to estimate payments for farms and counties for ARC-CO and PLC.
- [ARC and PLC Decision Tool](#), a tool available through Texas A&M that allows producers to obtain basic information regarding the decision and factors that should be taken into consideration such as future commodity prices and historic yields to estimate payments for 2022.

### 2021 Payments and Contracts

ARC and PLC payments for a given crop year are paid out the following fall to allow actual county yields and the Market Year Average prices to be finalized. This month, FSA processed payments to producers enrolled in 2021 ARC-CO, ARC-IC and PLC for covered commodities that triggered for the crop year.

For ARC-CO, producers can view the [2021 ARC-CO Benchmark Yields and Revenues](#) online database, for payment rates applicable to their county and each covered commodity. For PLC, payments have triggered for rapeseed and peanuts.

For ARC-IC, producers should contact their local FSA office for additional information pertaining to 2021 payment information, which relies on producer-specific yields for the crop and farm to determine benchmark yields and actual year yields when calculating revenues.

### **By the Numbers**

In 2021, producers signed nearly 1.8 million ARC or PLC contracts, and 251 million out of 273 million base acres were enrolled in the programs. For the 2022 crop year signed contracts surpassed 1.8 million, to be paid in the fall of 2023, if a payment triggers.

Since ARC and PLC were first authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill and reauthorized by the 2018 Farm Bill, these safety-net programs have paid out more than \$34.9 billion to producers of covered commodities.

### **More Information**

For more information on ARC and PLC, visit the [ARC and PLC webpage](#) or contact your local [USDA Service Center](#).

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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](https://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](https://farmers.gov/mydocs) to learn more about Box and OneSpan, steps for getting started, and additional resources for conducting business with USDA online.

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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 x2 or visit [fsa.usda.gov](https://fsa.usda.gov).



### Niobrara County USDA Service Center

905 S Main St  
Lusk, WY 82225

Phone: 307-334-2953  
FSA - Ext. 2 --- NRCS - Ext. 3  
Fax: 855-415-3433

#### **FARM SERVICE AGENCY**

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#### **District Conservationist**

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#### **Rangeland Management Specialist**

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**Niobrara FSA County Committee**

Joe Kruse, Chairman

Kurt Gaukel, Vice Chairman

Carson Wurdeman, Member

Carol Geisinger, SDA Voting Member

Next Meeting: February 16, 2023