



- [Niobrara County Updates](#)
- [Rolling Out Revenue Based Disaster and Pandemic Assistance Programs](#)
- [USDA Announces Conservation Reserve Program Signup for 2023](#)
- [Keeping Livestock Inventory Records](#)
- [FSA Offers Joint Financing Option on Direct Farm Ownership Loans](#)

## Niobrara County Updates

Greetings Niobrara County Farmers and Ranchers!

We are hoping you are all managing through this difficult winter. We are also hoping and praying this will equate to an abundant spring with plenty of green grass and bountiful crops!

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 have made contact with the producers who have yet to complete their 2023 contract(s). If you have received something from us pertaining to your ARC/PLC enrollment, please contact the office to make an appointment to complete your contract by the deadline.

As you'll see in articles below, we've got a few new programs that are intended to help with losses in 2020 and 2021. They are both revenue-based programs, but each has a different focus. Please contact the office for more information on these if you are interested in participating, as well as reading the article included below about both new programs.

USDA has also announced the signup for General CRP, that will be open through April 7, 2023. The announcement for a Grasslands CRP signup will be released at a later date, so if you are interested in either of those programs, please contact the office.

As you continue to transport feed in 2023 due to the drought conditions that occurred in 2022, please notify the office if you have had more transportation miles than normal between 1/1/2023 and 4/30/2023, so that your program eligibility can be discussed further and the applicable program actions are taken.

As always, the Livestock Indemnity Program is available for livestock losses due to weather-related events. Please be sure to notify the office if you incur any such losses, as soon as you are aware of them. The deadline to report losses is 30 days from the time the loss became apparent to you.

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:**

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

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

April 1, 2023 – Deadline to obtain NAP coverage on spring-seeded crops

April 7, 2023 – Deadline to submit offer for General CRP signup

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

---

## 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](#).

---

## USDA Announces Conservation Reserve Program Signup for 2023

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that agricultural producers and private landowners can begin applying for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) General signup starting **February 27 through April 7, 2023**. CRP is a cornerstone voluntary conservation program offered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and a key tool in the Biden-Harris administration's effort to address climate change and help agricultural communities invest in the long-term well-being of their land and natural resources.

"The Conservation Reserve Program is one of the largest private lands conservation programs in the United States, offering a range of conservation options to farmers, ranchers and landowners," Vilsack said. "CRP has and continues to be a great fit for farmers with less productive or marginal cropland, helping them re-establish valuable land cover to help improve water quality, prevent soil erosion, and support wildlife habitat. Under this administration, we have made several updates to the program to increase producer interest and enrollment, strengthen the climate benefits of the program and help ensure underserved producers can find a pathway to entry into CRP."

Producers and landowners enrolled more than 5 million acres into CRP through signups in 2022, building on the acceptance of more than 3.1 million acres in the [largest Grassland CRP signup in history](#). There are currently 23 million acres enrolled in CRP, with 1.9 million set to expire this year. USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is aiming to reach the 27-million-acre cap statutorily set for fiscal year 2023.

### General CRP

General CRP helps producers and landowners establish long-term, resource-conserving plant species, such as approved grasses or trees, to control soil erosion, improve water quality and enhance wildlife habitat on cropland. Additionally, General CRP includes a Climate-Smart Practice Incentive to help increase carbon sequestration and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by helping producers and landowners establish trees and permanent grasses, enhance wildlife habitat, and restore wetlands.

### Continuous CRP

Under Continuous CRP, producers and landowners can enroll in CRP throughout the year. Offers are automatically accepted provided the producer and land meet the eligibility requirements and the enrollment

levels do not exceed the statutory cap. The Climate-Smart Practice Incentive is also available in the Continuous signup.

FSA offers several additional enrollment opportunities within Continuous CRP, including the Clean Lakes Estuaries and Rivers Initiative (CLEAR30), the State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) Initiative, the Farmable Wetlands Program (FWP), and the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). The CLEAR30 Initiative, which was originally piloted in twelve states in the Great Lakes and Chesapeake Bay watershed, has been expanded nationwide, allowing producers and landowners to enroll in 30-year CRP contracts for water quality practices. Under this administration, FSA also moved SAFE practices back to the Continuous CRP signup, giving producers and landowners more opportunities to participate in the initiative. Through the FWP, producers and landowners can enroll land in CRP as part of their efforts to restore previously farmed wetlands and wetland buffers, to improve both vegetation and water flow.

This administration has also made significant improvements to CREP, which leverages federal and non-federal funds to target specific State, regional or nationally significant conservation concerns. Specifically, USDA made significant improvements to CREP to reduce barriers and make the program more accessible to a broad range of producers and new types of partners. These updates included flexibility for partners to provide matching funds in the form of cash, in-kind contributions, or technical assistance, along with an investment in additional staff to work directly with partners. Through CREP, for the first time ever, three Tribal Nations are now partnering with USDA to help conserve, maintain, and improve grassland productivity, reduce soil erosion, and enhance wildlife habitat.

### **Grassland CRP**

FSA will announce the dates for Grassland CRP signup in the coming weeks. Grassland CRP is a working lands program, helping landowners and operators protect grassland, including rangeland and pastureland and certain other lands, while maintaining the areas as working grazing lands. Protecting grasslands contributes positively to the economy of many regions, provides biodiversity of plant and animal populations, and provides important carbon sequestration benefits to deliver lasting climate outcomes.

### **How to Sign Up**

Landowners and producers interested in CRP should contact their local [USDA Service Center](#) to learn more or to apply for the program before their deadlines.

Producers with expiring CRP acres can use the Transition Incentives Program (TIP), which incentivizes producers who sell or enter a long-term lease with a beginning, veteran, or socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher who plans to sustainably farm or ranch the land.

### **More Information**

Signed into law in 1985, CRP is one of the largest voluntary private-lands conservation programs in the United States. It was originally intended to primarily control soil erosion and potentially stabilize commodity prices by taking marginal lands out of production. The program has evolved over the years, providing many conservation and economic benefits.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. Under the Biden-Harris administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit [usda.gov](https://usda.gov).

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

---

# Keeping Livestock Inventory Records

Livestock inventory records are necessary in the event of a natural disaster, so remember to keep them updated.

When disasters strike, the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) can help you if you've suffered excessive livestock death losses and grazing or feed losses due to eligible natural disasters.

To participate in livestock disaster assistance programs, you'll be required to provide verifiable documentation of death losses resulting from an eligible adverse weather event and must submit a notice of loss to your local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss of livestock is apparent. For grazing or feed losses, you must submit a notice of loss to your local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent and should maintain documentation and receipts.

You should record all pertinent information regarding livestock inventory records including:

- Documentation of the number, kind, type, and weight range of livestock
- Beginning inventory supported by birth recordings or purchase receipts.

For more information on documentation requirements, contact your Niobrara County USDA Service Center at 307-334-2953, Ext. 2 or visit [fsa.usda.gov](https://fsa.usda.gov).

---

## FSA Offers Joint Financing Option on Direct Farm Ownership Loans

The USDA Farm Service Agency's (FSA) [Direct Farm Ownership loans](https://fsa.usda.gov/direct-farm-ownership-loans) can help farmers and ranchers become owner-operators of family farms, improve and expand current operations, increase agricultural productivity, and assist with land tenure to save farmland for future generations.

There are three types of Direct Farm Ownership Loans: regular, down payment and joint financing. FSA also offers a [Direct Farm Ownership Microloan](https://fsa.usda.gov/direct-farm-ownership-microloan) option for smaller financial needs up to \$50,000.

Joint financing allows FSA to provide more farmers and ranchers with access to capital. FSA lends up to 50 percent of the total amount financed. A commercial lender, a State program or the seller of the property being purchased, provides the balance of loan funds, with or without an FSA guarantee. The maximum loan amount for a joint financing loan is \$600,000, and the repayment period for the loan is up to 40 years.

The operation must be an eligible farm enterprise. Farm Ownership loan funds cannot be used to finance nonfarm enterprises and all applicants must be able to meet general eligibility requirements. Loan applicants are also required to have participated in the business operations of a farm or ranch for at least three years out of the 10 years prior to the date the application is submitted. The applicant must show documentation that their participation in the business operation of the farm or ranch was not solely as a laborer.

For more information about farm loans, 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**

PO BOX 720  
LUSK, WY 82225

**Acting County Executive Director**

Courtney Yelton  
[courtney.yelton@usda.gov](mailto:courtney.yelton@usda.gov)

**Program Technicians**

Kimberly Nusbaum  
[kimberly.nusbaum@usda.gov](mailto:kimberly.nusbaum@usda.gov)

Calla Diane  
[Calla.Diane@usda.gov](mailto:Calla.Diane@usda.gov)

**Niobrara FSA County Committee**

Joe Kruse, Chairman  
Kurt Gaukel, Vice Chairman  
Carson Wurdeman, Member  
Carol Geisinger, SDA Voting Member

Next Meeting: TBD

**NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION SERVICE**

PO BOX 659  
LUSK, WY 82225

**District Conservationist**

Clint Anderson  
[clint.anderson@usda.gov](mailto:clint.anderson@usda.gov)

**Rangeland Management Specialist**

Riley Cameron  
[Riley.Cameron@usda.gov](mailto:Riley.Cameron@usda.gov)