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Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

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Arizona FSA Newsletter

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March 15 is Deadline to Make Elections and Complete Enrollment in 2021 Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) Programs

Agricultural producers can now make elections and enroll in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for the 2021 crop year.

Enrollment for the 2021 crop year closes March 15, 2021.

ARC provides income support payments on historical base acres when actual crop revenue declines below a specified guaranteed level. PLC provides income support payments on historical base acres when the effective price for a covered commodity falls below its reference price.

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.

2021 Elections and Enrollment

Producers can elect coverage and enroll in crop-by-crop ARC-County or PLC, or ARC-Individual for the entire farm, for the 2021 crop year. Although election changes for 2021 are optional, enrollment (signed contract) is required for each year of the program. If a producer has a multi-year contract on the farm and makes an election change for 2021, it will be necessary to sign a new contract.

If an election is not submitted by the deadline of March 15, 2021, the election defaults to the current election for crops on the farm from the prior crop year.

For crop years 2022 and 2023, producers will have an opportunity to make new elections during those signups. Farm owners cannot enroll in either program unless they have a share interest in the farm.

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](#), the University of Illinois tool that offers farmers the ability to run payment estimate modeling for their farms and counties for ARC-County and PLC.
- [ARC and PLC Decision Tool](#), the Texas A&M tool allows producers to analyze payment yield updates and expected payments for 2021. Producers who have used the tool in the past should see their username and much of their farm data already available in the system.

Crop Insurance Considerations

Producers are reminded that enrolling in ARC or PLC programs can impact eligibility for some crop insurance products offered by USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA). Producers who elect and enroll in PLC also have the option of purchasing Supplemental Coverage Option (SCO) through their Approved Insurance Provider, but producers of covered commodities who elect ARC are ineligible for SCO on their planted acres.

Unlike SCO, RMA's Enhanced Coverage Option (ECO) is unaffected by participating in ARC for the same crop, on the same acres. You may elect ECO regardless of your farm program election.

Upland cotton farmers who choose to enroll seed cotton base acres in ARC or PLC are ineligible for the stacked income protection plan, or STAX, on their planted cotton acres.

More Information

For more information on ARC and PLC, including two online decision tools that assist producers in making enrollment and election decisions specific to their operations, visit the [ARC and PLC webpage](#).

For additional questions and assistance, contact your local USDA service center. To locate your local FSA office, visit farmers.gov/service-locator.

Policy Updates for Acreage Reporting

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) recently made several policy updates for acreage reporting for cover crops, revising intended use, late-filed provisions, grazing allotments as well as updated the definitions of "idle" and "fallow."

Reporting Cover Crops:

Cover crop types can be chosen from the following four categories:

- **Cereals and other grasses**
- **Legumes**
- **Brassicas and other broadleaves**
- **Mixtures**
- If the cover crop is harvested for any use other than forage or grazing and is not terminated according to policy guidelines, then that crop will no longer be considered a cover crop and the acreage report must be revised to reflect the actual crop.

Permitted Revision of Intended use After Acreage Reporting Date:

New operators or owners who pick up a farm after the acreage reporting deadline has passed and the crop has already been reported on the farm, have 30 calendar days from the date when the new operator or owner acquired the lease on land, control of the land or ownership and new producer crop share interest in the previously reported crop acreage. Under this policy, appropriate documentation must be provided to the County Committee's

satisfaction to determine that a legitimate operator or ownership and producer crop share interest change occurred to permit the revision.

Acreage Reports:

In order to maintain program eligibility and benefits, you must timely file acreage reports. Failure to file an acreage report by the crop acreage reporting deadline may result in ineligibility for future program benefits. FSA will not accept acreage reports provided more than a year after the acreage reporting deadline.

Reporting Grazing Allotments:

FSA offices can now accept acreage reports for grazing allotments. You will use form "FSA-578" to report grazing allotments as animal unit months (AUMs) using the "Reporting Unit" field. Your local FSA office will need the grazing period start and end date and the percent of public land.

Definitions of Terms

FSA defines "idle" as cropland or a balance of cropland within a Common Land Unit (CLU) (field/subfield) which is not planted or considered not planted and does not meet the definition of fallow or skip row.

Fallow is considered unplanted cropland acres which are part of a crop/fallow rotation where cultivated land that is normally planted is purposely kept out of production during a regular growing season.

For more information, contact your local County USDA Service Center or visit [fsa.usda.gov](https://www.fsa.usda.gov).

USDA Supports Military Veteran's Transition to Farming

Are you a military veteran interested in farming? USDA offers resources to help you:

- **Fund Your Operation:** USDA's Farm Service Agency offers a variety of [funding opportunities](#) to help agricultural producers finance their businesses. Certain funds are targeted for veterans and beginning farmers and ranchers.
- **Conserve Natural Resources:** USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service offers [conservation programs and expert one-on-one technical assistance](#) to strengthen agricultural operations now and into the future. Veterans may be eligible for a cost share of up to 90 percent and advance payments of up to 50 percent to cover certain conservation practices.
- **Manage Risks:** USDA is here to help you prepare for and recover from the unexpected. Veterans who are beginning farmers may be eligible for reduced premiums, application fee

waivers, increased insurance coverage, and other incentives for multiple [USDA programs that support risk management](#).

USDA wants to ensure that veterans transitioning to agriculture have the resources needed to succeed. While USDA offices are currently closed to visitors because of the pandemic, Service Center staff continue to work with agricultural producers via phone, email, and other digital tools. To conduct business, please contact your local USDA Service Center. Additionally, more information related to USDA's response and relief for producers can be found at farmers.gov/coronavirus. If you're a new farmer, you can also reach out to your [state Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coordinator](#).

FSA Offers Loan Servicing Options

There are options for Farm Service Agency (FSA) loan customers during financial stress. If you are a borrower who is unable to make payments on a loan, contact your local FSA Farm Loan Manager to learn about your options.

USDA Accepting Applications for Renewals of the Conservation Stewardship Program in Arizona

The United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) offers eligible clients with active Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) contracts an opportunity to compete for a renewal.

During the first half of the fifth year of the existing contract term, NRCS may allow a participant to apply and compete to renew their contract for an additional 5-year period.

Participants with 2017 CSP contracts (general and renewal) may apply to renew their contract if they agree to adopt additional activities to achieve higher conservation levels on their lands. The application submission deadline is **March 31, 2021**.

NRCS will assess and rank all renewal applications received on or before the renewal application cutoff date. Renewal applicants will compete within a separate state-established ranking pool, and NRCS will make funding selections based on ranking score and available funds.

To apply for renewal consideration, please complete and submit Forms [NRCS-CPA-1200, "Conservation Program Application,"](#) and [NRCS-CPA-1248, "Conservation Stewardship Program Contract Renewal Offer Worksheet."](#)

You can also obtain these forms online at <http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eForms>.

Producers interested in renewing their CSP contracts should contact their [local NRCS field office](#).

The deadline to be considered for fiscal year 2022 funding of CSP contract renewals in Arizona is Wednesday, **March 31, 2021**.

For more information on CSP, visit nrcs.usda.gov/crp or contact your [local NRCS field office](#).

- [NRCS-CPA-1200, "Conservation Program Application".pdf](#)

- [NRCS-CPA-1248, "Conservation Stewardship Program Contract Renewal Offer Worksheet".pdf](#)

USDA Accepting Applications for the Conservation Stewardship Program in Arizona

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) encourages agriculture producers who want to enhance their current conservation efforts to apply for the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) by **April 5, 2021**.

Through the program, NRCS provides financial and technical assistance to participants for the conservation, protection, and improvement of soil, water, energy and other related natural resources and for any similar conservation purpose as determined by the agency.

The program also encourages the adoption of cutting-edge technologies and new management techniques such as precision agriculture applications, on-site water management, and advanced grazing to improve soil health and plant diversity.

While applications for CSP are accepted year-round, applicants must apply by April 5, 2021, to their local field office to be considered for this funding period.

Applicants may apply for all categories for which they are eligible.

There are five funding opportunities listed under this announcement:

- Beginning Farmer and Rancher (BFR)
- Socially-disadvantage Farmer and Rancher (SDFR)
- Organic and transitioning-to-organic producers
- Agricultural land, including cropland, pasture, or rangeland
- Nonindustrial private forest land (NIPF)

Required Application Information:

- Form NRCS-CPA-1200, "Conservation Program Application"
- Provide a map that identifies and delineates the boundaries of all eligible land uses and acres included in the operation.
- Identify any ineligible land that is part of the operation as described above in section.

Producers interested in applying for the program should contact their [local NRCS field office](#). For more information, visit the [Conservation Stewardship Program website](#).

- [NRCS-CPA-1200, "Conservation Program Application".pdf](#)

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400

Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).