

November 15, 2020



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

# NEWSLETTER

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## Florida FSA Newsletter

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### Florida Farm Service Agency

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<https://www.fsa.usda.gov/fl>

#### State Committee:

Michelle Williamson (Chair)  
Mike Adams  
Jimmy LeFils  
Mack Glass  
Mark Soddors

### Wrapping up #Harvest2020 and Preparing for the Next Crop Year

USDA followed the #Plant2020 and #Harvest2020 progress across the country as farmers like you shared photos and videos, giving us a glimpse into planting and harvesting on your operation. From preparing the ground to harvesting the last acre, we know it's been a busy and unusual year.

#### #Harvest2020

So far, we've received photo and video submissions from 32 states. Our [#Harvest2020 campaign](#) is still running, so there's still time to put your operation on the map. You can share your harvest progress by sending an email to [sharingoursuccesses@usda.gov](mailto:sharingoursuccesses@usda.gov) with landscape-orientation photos or videos under 10 seconds, a short description of your photo or video, your city and state, and your Twitter handle, if you have one.

**State Executive Director:**  
Sherry McCorkle

## **Preparing for the Next Crop Year**

**Division Chiefs:**

With #Harvest2020 wrapping up across the country, it's time to think ahead about the approaching 2021 crop year. We agree that you should definitely celebrate the end of harvest and enjoy the holidays, but going into the next crop year with a plan is always a good idea.

**Administrative Officer**  
Mark Cotrell

**Farm Program**  
Tom Hockert

To read USDA's five things to consider to help you plan for the next crop year visit [farmers.gov/connect/blog/conservation/wrapping-harvest2020-and-preparing-next-crop-year](https://farmers.gov/connect/blog/conservation/wrapping-harvest2020-and-preparing-next-crop-year).

**Farm Loans**  
Christy Marshall

Please contact your local FSA Office for questions specific to your operation or county.

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## **USDA to Open Signup for the Conservation Reserve Program and CRP Grasslands in Early 2021**

USDA announced the 2021 signup periods for general Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and CRP Grasslands offers. General signup for CRP will be open from January 4, 2021 to February 12, 2021; signup for CRP Grasslands runs from March 15, 2021 to April 23, 2021. Both programs are competitive and provide annual rental payments for land devoted to conservation purposes.

CRP and the many focused programs that come under it, like CRP Grasslands, are some of the most critical tools to help producers better manage their operations while conserving natural resources. CRP has proven to protect the Nation's valuable resources. Next year's signup gives farmers and ranchers an opportunity to enroll in CRP for the first time or continue their participation for another term.

Producers may apply by contacting their FSA office.

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## **USDA Disaster Assistance Application Deadline is Nov. 20 for Certain 2017, 2018 and 2019 Crop, Milk and On-Farm Storage Loss**

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds producers that that Friday, Nov. 20 is the last day to submit applications for disaster assistance for eligible losses caused by Tropical Storm Cindy in 2017, peach and blueberry losses due to extreme cold or hurricanes in 2017 and 2018, and milk or on-farm storage loss due to qualifying natural disasters in 2018 and 2019.

The Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act, 2019 (the Act) amended the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 to provide assistance for additional losses under the 2017 Wildfires and Hurricanes Indemnity Program (WHIP) and created new disaster programs to cover losses specifically named within the legislation for milk dumped due to adverse weather and loss of on-farm stored commodities.

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## **USDA's Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2 Application Deadline is December 11**

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds farmers and ranchers that the deadline to apply for the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2 (CFAP 2) is Dec. 11, 2020. This program provides direct relief to producers who continue to face market disruptions and associated costs because of COVID-19.

CFAP 2 will provide up to \$14 billion to eligible producers of certain row crops, livestock, dairy, specialty crops, aquaculture and more. All eligible commodities, payment rates and calculations can be found on [farmers.gov/cfap](https://farmers.gov/cfap). CFAP 2 is a separate program from the first iteration of the program (CFAP 1) and interested producers must complete a new application to be eligible for payment for CFAP 2.

Customers seeking one-on-one support with the CFAP 2 application process can call 877-508-8364 to speak directly with a USDA employee ready to offer general assistance. This is a recommended first step before a producer engages the team at the FSA county office.

### **Application Options**

Producers have several options for applying to the CFAP 2 program by the Dec. 11 deadline:

- Using an online portal at [gov/cfap](https://gov/cfap). This allows producers with secure USDA login credentials, known as eAuthentication, to certify eligible commodities online, digitally sign applications and submit directly to the local USDA Service Center.
- Completing the application form using our CFAP 2 Application Generator and Payment Calculator found at [gov/cfap](https://gov/cfap). This Excel workbook allows customers to input information specific to their operation to determine estimated payments and populate the application form, which can be printed, then signed and submitted to their local USDA Service Center.
- Downloading the AD-3117 application form from [gov/cfap](https://gov/cfap) and manually completing the form to submit to the local USDA Service Center by mail, electronically, or by hand delivery to an office drop box. In some limited cases, the office may be open for in-person business by appointment. Visit [farmers.gov/coronavirus/service-center-status](https://farmers.gov/coronavirus/service-center-status) to check the status of your local office.

USDA Service Centers can also work with producers to complete and securely transmit digitally-signed applications through two commercially available tools: Box and OneSpan. Producers who are interested in digitally signing their applications should notify their local FSA office when calling to discuss the CFAP 2 application process. You can learn more about these solutions at [farmers.gov/mydocs](https://farmers.gov/mydocs).

Producers of commodities with payments based on acreage will use acreage and yield information provided by FSA through the annual acreage reporting process. Producers have the option to complete their application by working directly with their local FSA office or online through the CFAP 2 Application Portal.

All other eligibility forms, such as those related to adjusted gross income and payment information, can be downloaded from [farmers.gov/cfap/apply](https://farmers.gov/cfap/apply). For existing FSA customers, including those who participated in CFAP 1, these documents are likely already on file.

Both CFAP 1 and CFAP 2 are self-certification programs, which means the applicant certifies the information submitted is correct. FSA will soon begin an important step in the internal controls portion of CFAP 1 by conducting spot checks. Producers have been randomly selected using a statistically sound methodology. These CFAP 1 applicants will be contacted by FSA staff and asked to provide supporting documentation to verify the information certified by the producer on their CFAP 1 application.

As of Nov. 9, FSA has paid more than \$9.5 billion with more than 576,000 applications for CFAP 2. This builds upon more than \$10.3 billion paid through CFAP 1.

## More Information

To find the latest information on CFAP 2, visit [farmers.gov/cfap](https://farmers.gov/cfap) or call 877-508-8364.

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## USDA Service Centers are Here to Help!

At USDA, we are committed to helping farmers complete loan applications, environmental reviews, and other paperwork free of charge. One-on-one support is available at more than 2,300 USDA Service Centers nationwide. USDA's Farm Service Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Service staff are usually co-located at these Service Centers, and can help guide farmers to the best USDA assistance based on their unique goals, whether it is loans, conservation programs, or insurance.

Service Center staff can guide farmers through the process of preparing and submitting required paperwork on their own, with no need to hire a paid preparer. Language translation service is available in all USDA Service Centers, so one-on-one assistance with a Service Center employee can be translated in real time for farmers requiring it. And while some program and loan applications do have an administrative fee for filing, there is never a charge for preparation services provided by USDA staff.

Farmers who come to the USDA Service Center can:

- Establish their farm by registering for a farm number, which is required for USDA programs and assistance.
- Learn how to meet conservation compliance provisions.
- Verify eligibility for USDA programs.
- Discuss their business and conservation goals.
- Create a conservation plan.
- Fill out and file loan and program applications.

To find the nearest USDA Service Center, visit <https://www.farmers.gov/service-center-locator>.

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## Mediation is a Free Option to Help Resolve Farm-Related Disputes

Florida farmers can now mediate a wide range of disputes at no cost through the Florida Agricultural Mediation Program (FAMP). Mediation is designed to resolve disputes quickly and confidentially while saving the parties' time, money, and stress by avoiding hearings or litigation. The 2018 Farm Bill enables the FAMP to mediate agricultural issues involving leases, farm transitions/successions, organic certification, neighbor complaints, and more. To request free mediation or for more information, please call (800) 616-7863 or go online at [www.agmediation.org](http://www.agmediation.org). All calls are confidential.

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## More than \$7 Billion Paid in Second Round of USDA Coronavirus Food Assistance Program

USDA announced that in the first month of the application period, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) approved more than \$7 billion in payments to producers in the second round of the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program. CFAP 2 provides agricultural producers with financial assistance to help absorb some of the increased marketing costs associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since CFAP 2 enrollment began on September 21, FSA has approved more than 443,000 applications. The top five states for payments are Iowa, Nebraska, Minnesota, Illinois and Kansas. USDA has released a [data dashboard](#) on application progress and program payments and will

release further updates each Monday at 2:00 p.m. ET. The report can be viewed at [farmers.gov/cfap](https://farmers.gov/cfap).

Through CFAP 2, USDA is making available up to \$14 billion for agricultural producers who continue to face market disruptions and associated costs because of COVID-19. CFAP 2 is a separate program from the first iteration of CFAP (CFAP 1). Farmers and ranchers who participated in CFAP 1 will not be automatically enrolled and must complete a new application for CFAP 2. FSA will accept CFAP 2 applications through December 11, 2020.

### **Eligible Commodities**

CFAP 2 supports eligible producers of row crops, livestock, specialty crops, dairy, aquaculture, and many other commodities, including many that were ineligible for CFAP 1. FSA's [CFAP 2 Eligible Commodities Finder](#) makes finding eligible commodities and payment rates simple. Access this tool and other resources at [farmers.gov/cfap](https://farmers.gov/cfap).

### **Getting Help from FSA**

New customers seeking one-on-one support with the CFAP 2 application process can call 877-508-8364 to speak directly with a USDA employee ready to offer general assistance. This is a recommended first step before a producer engages the team at the FSA county office at their local USDA Service Center.

FSA offers multiple options for producers to apply for CFAP 2. Producers with an eAuthentication account can apply online through the CFAP 2 Application Portal. Also available is a payment calculator and application generator that is an Excel workbook that allows producers to input information specific to their operation to determine estimated payments and populate the application form, which can be printed, signed, and submitted to the local FSA office. Producers can also download the CFAP 2 application and other eligibility forms from [farmers.gov/cfap](https://farmers.gov/cfap).

Producers of acreage-based commodities will use acreage and yield information provided by FSA through the annual acreage reporting process. Producers have the option to complete their application by working directly with their local FSA staff or online through the CFAP 2 Application Portal.

CFAP 2 is not a loan program, and there is no cost to apply.

### **More Information**

To find the latest information on CFAP 2, visit [farmers.gov/CFAP](https://farmers.gov/CFAP) or call 877-508-8364.

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## **USDA Issues CRP Payments**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is issuing \$1.68 billion in payments to agricultural producers and landowners for the 21.9 million acres enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), which provides annual rental payments for land devoted to conservation purposes.

Through CRP, farmers and ranchers 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. Farmers and ranchers who participate in CRP help provide numerous benefits to the nation's environment and economy.

Signed into law in 1985, CRP is one of the largest 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. The program marks its 35-year anniversary this December. Program successes include:

- Preventing more than 9 billion tons of soil from eroding, which is enough soil to fill 600 million dump trucks;

- Reducing nitrogen and phosphorous runoff relative to annually tilled cropland by 95 and 85 percent, respectively;
- Sequestering an annual average of 49 million tons of greenhouse gases, equal to taking 9 million cars off the road;
- Creating more than 3 million acres of restored wetlands while protecting more than 175,000 stream miles with riparian forest and grass buffers, which is enough to go around the world seven times; and
- Benefiting bees and other pollinators and increasing populations of ducks, pheasants, turkey, bobwhite quail, prairie chickens, grasshopper sparrows, and many other birds.

The successes of CRP contribute to USDA's [Agriculture Innovation Agenda](#) and its goal of reducing the environmental footprint of U.S. agriculture by half by 2050. Earlier this year, Secretary Perdue announced the department-wide initiative to align resources, programs, and research to position American agriculture to better meet future global demands.

CRP participants with contracts effective beginning on October 1, 2020, will receive their first annual rental payment in October 2021.

For more information on CRP, visit [fsa.usda.gov](https://fsa.usda.gov) or contact your [local FSA county office](#).

## Applying for Youth Loans

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) makes loans to youth to establish and operate agricultural income-producing projects in connection with 4-H clubs, FFA and other agricultural groups. Projects must be planned and operated with the help of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is \$5,000.

### Youth Loan Eligibility Requirements:

- Be a citizen of the United States (which includes Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) or a legal resident alien
- Be 10 years to 20 years of age
- Comply with FSA's general eligibility requirements
- Be unable to get a loan from other sources
- Conduct a modest income-producing project in a supervised program of work as outlined above
- Demonstrate capability of planning, managing and operating the project under guidance and assistance from a project advisor. The project supervisor must recommend the youth loan applicant, along with providing adequate supervision.

For help preparing the application forms, contact your local County USDA Service Center. To locate your local FSA office, visit [farmers.gov/service-center-locator](https://farmers.gov/service-center-locator).

## 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 your County USDA Service Center or visit [fsa.usda.gov](https://fsa.usda.gov).

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## Dates to Remember

November 20 - Deadline for Disaster Assistance Application (Eligible 2017, 2018 and 2019 Losses)

November 26 - Federal Holiday Observed. Offices Closed.

December 11 - Deadline for CFAP 2 Application

December 11 - Deadline for Dairy Margin Coverage Program Enrollment for 2021

December 14 - Deadline for Seafood Trade Relief Program Sign-up

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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).