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| [View as a webpage / Share](https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDAFARMERS/bulletins/3121351) |
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| **Louisiana USDA-FSA Updates**  - April  2022 |
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| USDA Offers CLEAR30 Option for Producers to Enroll Land with Expiring Conservation Contracts

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| lakeProducers may apply for CLEAR30 through **August 5, 2022**The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is announcing the signup period for its Clean Lakes, Estuaries, And Rivers initiative (CLEAR30) — a nationwide opportunity for certain landowners and agricultural producers currently implementing water quality practices through the [Conservation Reserve Program](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2Fprograms-and-services%2Fconservation-programs%2Fconservation-reserve-program%2Findex%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=04%7C01%7C%7C14036ef6d4654220123f08da1bd69579%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637852905829760451%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=to9vwodOatM3zA7TxBiekQFMEbltffBK6bVYKP1J7Vg%3D&reserved=0) (CRP) to enroll in 30-year contracts, extending the lifespan and strengthening the benefits of important water quality practices on their land.  Producers may apply for CLEAR30, a voluntary, incentive-based conservation program, **from April 1, 2022, through Aug. 5, 2022**.   Cropland and certain pastureland currently enrolled in Continuous CRP or the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and dedicated to an eligible water quality practice such as riparian buffers, contour strips, grass waterways or wetland restoration may be eligible if their contracts are expiring by September 30, 2022.  CLEAR30 contracts will be effective beginning Oct. 1, 2022. These long-term contracts ensure that conservation practices remain in place for 30 years, which improves water quality through reducing sediment and nutrient runoff and helping prevent algal blooms. Conservation in riparian areas also provides important carbon sequestration benefits. Traditional CRP contracts run from 10 to 15 years. **About CLEAR30** CLEAR30 was established in the 2018 Farm Bill to better address water quality concerns. Originally, CLEAR30 was only available in the Great Lakes and Chesapeake Bay watersheds; in 2021, FSA made CLEAR30 available to agricultural producers and landowners nationwide, and participation grew nearly seven-fold from 2020 to 2021. Annual rental payments for landowners who enroll in CLEAR30 will be equal to the current Continuous CRP annual payment rate plus a **20** percent water quality incentive payment and an annual rental rate adjustment of **27.5** percent.   **How to Sign Up** To sign up for CLEAR30, landowners and producers should contact their local [USDA Service Center](https://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery) by **Aug. 5, 2022**.  Contact information can be found at [farmers.gov/service-locator](https://www.farmers.gov/service-center-locator?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery). Additionally, fact sheets and other resources are available at [fsa.usda.gov/crp](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2Fprograms-and-services%2Fconservation-programs%2Fconservation-reserve-program%2Findex%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=04%7C01%7C%7C14036ef6d4654220123f08da1bd69579%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637852905829760451%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=to9vwodOatM3zA7TxBiekQFMEbltffBK6bVYKP1J7Vg%3D&reserved=0).     **More Information** CLEAR30 is an option available through CRP, which is one of the largest voluntary private-lands conservation programs in the United States. CRP was originally intended to primarily control soil erosion and stabilize commodity prices by taking environmentally sensitive lands out of production. The program has evolved over the years, providing numerous conservation and economic benefits. In addition to CLEAR30, signups are also open for [Continuous CRP](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2FAssets%2FUSDA-FSA-Public%2Fusdafiles%2FFactSheets%2Fcrp-continuous-enrollment-period-factsheet.pdf%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=04%7C01%7C%7C14036ef6d4654220123f08da1bd69579%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637852905829760451%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=gdEBqseQkZGWkyeoXJWFIA3sbr5r%2FbwxUZmp0k5Lr%2Bs%3D&reserved=0) and [Grassland CRP](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2FAssets%2FUSDA-FSA-Public%2Fusdafiles%2FFactSheets%2Ffsa_crpgrasslands_workinglandsfactsheet_21.pdf%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=04%7C01%7C%7C14036ef6d4654220123f08da1bd69579%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637852905829760451%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=gw2en%2FwJiSqr%2FDO%2FvGusv2xmHhPMhOuVpAX5PEH5gug%3D&reserved=0).   |

USDA Encourages Producers to Enroll in Grasslands CRPThe U.S. Department ore (USDA) encourages producers and landowners to enroll in the Grassland Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) starting next week through May 13, 2022. Grassland CRP provides a unique opportunity for farmers, ranchers, and agricultural landowners to keep land in agricultural production and supplement their income while improving their soils and permanent grass cover.   The program had its highest enrollment in history in 2021 and is part of the Biden-Harris Administration’s broader effort to equip producers with the tools they need to help address climate change and invest in the long-term health of our natural resources.[Grassland CRP](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2Fprograms-and-services%2Fconservation-programs%2Fcrp-grasslands%2Findex%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=04%7C01%7C%7C14036ef6d4654220123f08da1bd69579%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637852905829760451%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=a5UN68SaqMHtU4I0iHYU%2FrWq3U%2FlczPWiewxt8GiIKU%3D&reserved=0) is a federally funded voluntary working lands program. Through the program, USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) provides annual rental payments to landowners to maintain and conserve grasslands while allowing producers to graze, hay, and produce seed on that land.  Maintaining the existing permanent cover provides several benefits, including reducing erosion, providing wildlife habitat and migration corridors, and capturing and maintaining carbon in the soil and cover.    FSA provides participants with annual rental payments and cost-share assistance. The annual rental rate varies by county with a national minimum rental rate of $13 per acre for this signup. Contract duration is 10 or 15 years. **Grassland CRP National Priority Zones** Because Grassland CRP supports not only grazing operations but also biodiversity and conserving environmentally sensitive land such as that prone to wind erosion, FSA created two [National Priority Zones](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2FAssets%2FUSDA-FSA-Public%2Fusdafiles%2FConservation%2FPDF%2Fnational_grassland_crp_priority_zones_su203.pdf%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=04%7C01%7C%7C14036ef6d4654220123f08da1bd69579%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637852905829916216%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=%2BywMt58xqD5xXQFDHUibosVxhPMH9vean1m4tqqKS5c%3D&reserved=0) in 2021: the Greater Yellowstone Migration Corridor and Dust Bowl Zone. As part of the Biden-Harris Administration’s focus on conservation in important wildlife corridors and key seasonal ranges, for this year’s signup, FSA is expanding the Greater Yellowstone Wildlife Migration Corridor Priority Zone to include seven additional counties across Montana, Wyoming, and Utah, to help protect the big-game animal migration corridor associated with Wyoming elk, mule deer, and antelope.  Offers within one of these National Priority Zones will receive an additional 15 ranking points and $5 per acre if at least 50% of the offer is located in the zone. Alongside Grassland CRP, producers and landowners can also enroll acres in Continuous CRP under the ongoing sign up, which includes projects available through the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE).    **Broadening Reach of Program** As part of the Agency’s Justice40 efforts, producers and landowners who are historically underserved, including beginning farmers and military veterans, will receive 10 additional ranking points to enhance their offers. Additionally, USDA is working to broaden the scope and reach of Grassland CRP by leveraging the [Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2Fprograms-and-services%2Fconservation-programs%2Fconservation-reserve-enhancement%2Findex%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=04%7C01%7C%7C14036ef6d4654220123f08da1bd69579%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637852905829916216%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=v%2BK6y1BPpW3uAfpdxZAVqQXI%2BdCIF8XsJH4aLjDrLTI%3D&reserved=0)(CREP) to engage historically underserved communities. CREP is a partnership program that enables states, Tribal governments, non-profit, and private entities to partner with FSA to implement CRP practices and address high priority conservation and environmental objectives. Interested entities are encouraged to contact FSA. USDA to Gather Data About Farm LaborThe U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will conduct its biannual Agricultural Labor Survey during in April. The survey will collect information about hired labor from more than 300 Louisiana farmers and ranchers. NASS will publish survey results May 25 in the Farm Labor report available on the NASS website.In the survey, NASS asks producers to answer a variety of questions about hired farm labor on their operations, including total number of hired farm workers, the total hours worked, and total wages paid for the weeks of Jan. 9-15 and April 10-16. Survey participants can respond online at agcounts.usda.gov or by mail.Agricultural labor data are critical in helping producers when hiring workers and estimating expenses. The data that farm operators provide through NASS’s Agricultural Labor Survey allow federal policymakers to base farm labor policies on accurate information.USDA and the U.S. Department of Labor use the results of this survey to estimate the demand for and availability of seasonal agricultural workers, establish minimum wage rates for agricultural workers, administer farm labor recruitment and placement service programs, and assist legislators in determining labor policies.By asking about two separate time periods each time we collect data during the year, we are able to publish biannual data and capture seasonal variation. This approach reduces the number of times we survey farm businesses, while ensuring that accurate and timely data are available.All previous Farm Labor publications are available on the NASS website at [www.nass.usda.gov.](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nass.usda.gov%2FSurveys%2F%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=04%7C01%7C%7C14036ef6d4654220123f08da1bd69579%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637852905829916216%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=Y1s7G8pchCtOG%2BY4P9swbddjXLJRStZTk6LZ0veclGw%3D&reserved=0) For more information on NASS surveys and reports, call the NASS Delta Field Office at (800) 327-2970. Participants can visit this link for further instructions on completing the survey.Producers responding online will now use NASS’s new Respondent Portal. On the portal, producers can complete their surveys, see previously reported data, access data visualizations and reports of interest, link to other USDA agencies, get a local weather update and more.Using FSA Direct Farm Ownership Loans for Construction

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| barnsThe USDA Farm Service Agency’s (FSA) [Direct Farm Ownership loans](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2Fprograms-and-services%2Ffarm-loan-programs%2Ffarm-ownership-loans%2Findex%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=04%7C01%7C%7C14036ef6d4654220123f08da1bd69579%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637852905829916216%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=ORckErHACXZjYLfe3%2FjfX5cPjuyVEwtYDc%2FsEs5aBIA%3D&reserved=0) are a resource to 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://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2Fprograms-and-services%2Ffarm-loan-programs%2Fmicroloans%2Findex%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=04%7C01%7C%7C14036ef6d4654220123f08da1bd69579%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637852905829916216%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=bGSOvfRJtv9%2BvHU0WqkTikz2a6KuMoy4PLAtFfK%2F3T8%3D&reserved=0) option for smaller financial needs up to $50,000.Direct Farm Ownership Loans can be used to construct, purchase or improve farm dwellings, service buildings or other facilities, and to make improvements essential to an operation.Applicants must provide FSA with an estimate of the total cost of all planned development that completely describe the work, prior to loan approval and must show proof of sufficient funds to pay for the total cost of all planned development at or before loan closing. In some instances, applicants may be asked to provide certified plans, specifications or contract documents. The applicant cannot incur any debts for materials or labor or make any expenditures for development purposes prior to loan closing with the expectation of being reimbursed from FSA funds.Construction and development work may be performed either by the contract method or the borrower method. Under the contract method, construction and development contractors perform work according to a written contract with the applicant or borrower. If applying for a direct loan to finance a construction project, the applicant must obtain a surety bond that guarantees both payment and performance in the amount of the construction contract from a construction contractor.A surety bond is required when a contract exceeds $100,000. An authorized agency official determines that a surety bond appears advisable to protect the borrower against default of the contractor or a contract provides for partial payments in excess of the amount of 60 percent of the value of the work in place.Under the borrower method, the applicant or borrower will perform the construction and development work. The borrower method may only be used when the authorized agency official determines, based on information from the applicant, that the applicant possesses or arranges to obtain the necessary skill and managerial ability to complete the work satisfactorily and that such work will not interfere with the applicant’s farming operation or work schedule.Potential applicants should visit with FSA early in the initial project planning process to ensure environmental compliance.For more eligibility requirements and information about FSA Loan programs, contact your local County USDA Service Center or visit [fsa.usda.gov](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2F%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=04%7C01%7C%7C14036ef6d4654220123f08da1bd69579%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637852905829916216%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=%2F%2FJ1DUAM92pDV3YUDgNrW74lKuMof%2BV5jiLaJoQClZE%3D&reserved=0). |

Farmers to Receive Documentation of USDA ServicesThe Farm Service Agency (FSA) provides a receipt to customers who request or receive assistance or information on FSA programs.The 2014 Farm Bill requires a customer receipt to be issued for any agricultural program assistance requested from FSA, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Rural Development (RD). Receipts include the date, summary of the visit and any agricultural information, program and/or loan assistance provided to an individual or entity.A service is any information, program, or loan assistance provided whether through an office visit, email, fax, or letter.USDA Microloans Help Farmers Purchase Farmland and Improve Property

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| Urban Agriculture, National PhotoFarmers can use USDA farm ownership microloans to buy and improve property. These microloans are especially helpful to beginning or underserved farmers, U.S. veterans looking for a career in farming, and those who have small and mid-sized farming operations.Microloans can also help with farmland and building purchases and soil and water conservation improvements. FSA designed the expanded program to simplify the application process, expand eligibility requirements and expedite smaller real estate loans to help farmers strengthen their operations. Microloans provide up to $50,000 to qualified producers and can be issued to the applicant directly from the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA).To learn more about the FSA microloan program, contact your local County USDA Service Center at or visit [fsa.usda.gov/microloans](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2Fmicroloans%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=04%7C01%7C%7C14036ef6d4654220123f08da1bd69579%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637852905829916216%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=YUFK8iMp1qpqQsamKHIt51uFI5FyfO4K382MwGyM1YM%3D&reserved=0). |

Applying for Beginning Farmer Loans

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| Beginning FarmerAre you new to farming or ranching? USDA can help you get started or grow your farming operation through a variety of programs and services. From farm loans to crop insurance to conservation programs to disaster assistance, USDA is here to support you and your operation.USDA recently selected a national coordinator and state-level coordinators, who will focus on better serving beginning farmers and ranchers.Each state coordinator will receive training and develop tailored beginning farmer outreach plans for their state. Coordinators will help field employees better reach and serve beginning farmers and ranchers and will also be available to assist beginning farmers who need help navigating the variety of resources USDA has to offer. Visit [farmers.gov](http://www.farmers.gov/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery#_blank) to find Louisiana’s coordinator to help you get started today. |

USDA Updates Eligibility for Spot Market Hog Pandemic Program

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| Hogs The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has clarified the definition of a spot market sale and hog eligibility under the [Spot Market Hog Pandemic Program](http://www.farmers.gov/smhpp?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery) (SMHPP), which assists producers who sold hogs through a spot market sale from April 16, 2020, through Sept. 1, 2020. Hog producers will also now be required to submit documentation to support information provided on their SMHPP application. USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) will accept applications through April 29, 2022, which is an extension of the April 15, 2022, deadline previously set for the program.  USDA is offering the SMHPP in response to a reduction in packer production due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in fewer negotiated hogs being procured and subsequent lower market prices. The program is part of USDA’s broader [Pandemic Assistance for Producers](http://www.farmers.gov/pandemic-assistance?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery) initiative and addresses gaps in previous assistance for hog producers.**SMHPP Program Updates** When the pandemic disrupted normal marketing channels, including access to packers, producers sold their hogs through cash sales to local processors or butchers, direct sales to individuals and third-party intermediaries, including sale barns or brokers. The use of third-party intermediaries was the only available marketing alternative for many producers and are now included in SMHPP. The only direct to packer sales that are eligible for SMHPP are those through a negotiated sale. Hogs sold through a contract that includes a premium above the spot-market price or other formula such as the wholesale cut-out price remain ineligible. Hogs must be suitable and intended for slaughter to be eligible. Immature swine (pigs) are ineligible.FSA will now require documentation to support the accuracy of information provided on the FSA-940 Spot Market Hog Pandemic Program application, including the number of hogs reported on the application that were sold through a spot market sale and how the price was determined for the sale.SMHPP payments will be calculated by multiplying the number of head of eligible hogs, not to exceed 10,000 head, by the payment rate of $54 per head. To ensure SMHPP funding availability is disbursed equitably to all eligible producers, FSA will now issue payments after the application period ends. If calculated payments exceed the amount of available funding, payments will be factored.  **Applying for Assistance**   Eligible hog producers can apply for SMHPP by April 29, 2022, by completing the FSA-940, Spot Market Hog Pandemic Program application, along with required supporting documentation. Producers can visit [farmers.gov/smhpp](http://www.farmers.gov/smhpp?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery) for examples of supporting documentation, information on applicant eligibility and more information on how to apply.   Applications can be submitted to the FSA office at any USDA Service Center nationwide by mail, fax, hand delivery or via electronic means. To find their local FSA office, producers should [visit farmers.gov/service-locator](http://www.farmers.gov/service-locator?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery). Hog producers can also call 877-508-8364 to speak directly with a USDA employee ready to offer assistance.  |

Waiver of DCIA Compliance for Commodity and Farm Storage Facility Loan**Programs** On January 27, 2021, the Biden-Harris Administration suspended all debt collections, foreclosures, and other adverse actions for borrowers of direct farm loans and Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL) through USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) because of the national public health emergency caused by the Coronavirus pandemic.It has been determined that the January 2021 suspension included a waiver of the Debt Collection Improvement Act (DCIA) noncompliance for issuing new Marketing Assistance Loans (MAL), Loan Deficiency Payments (LDP) or FSFL to borrowers who are in delinquent status with FSFL or farm loans.Under normal circumstances, DCIA specifies that a person cannot obtain Federal financial assistance in the form of loans (other than disaster loans), loan insurance, or guarantees if that person has delinquent Federal non-tax debt. MAL, LDP, and FSFL programs administered by FSA are currently subject to these statutory constraints.FSA county offices will review MALs, LDPs, and FSFLs that were previously denied on or after January 27, 2021, because of DCIA noncompliance. Offices will notify applicants of the waiver provisions and the opportunity to obtain a loan. All applicable eligibility requirements remain in place with the exception of DCIA waiver.Reach out to your local FSA office for more information. To find your local office, visit [farmers.gov/service-locator](https://www.farmers.gov/working-with-us/service-center-locator?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery).USDA To Compensate Drought-Stricken Ranchers for Above Normal Costs to Haul Livestock to Forage Due to the persistent drought conditions in the Great Plains and West, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is offering additional relief through the [Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-raised Fish Program (ELAP)](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2FAssets%2FUSDA-FSA-Public%2Fusdafiles%2FFactSheets%2Felap-livestock-fact-sheet.pdf%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=04%7C01%7C%7C14036ef6d4654220123f08da1bd69579%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637852905829916216%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=jBKCw1Qb8o%2BGdls7gnu3CWyA0Y4iU0KH%2Bhc9r%2B1CdKI%3D&reserved=0) to help ranchers cover above normal costs of hauling livestock to forage or other grazing acres. This policy enhancement complements previously announced ELAP compensation for hauling feed to livestock.  ELAP livestock and feed hauling assistance is retroactive for 2021 and will be available for losses in 2022 and subsequent years.   **ELAP Assistance Overview** ELAP provides financial assistance to eligible producers of livestock, honeybees and farm-raised fish for losses due to disease, certain adverse weather events or loss conditions as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture. In addition to ELAP covering feed transportation costs where grazing and hay resources have been depleted, ELAP now also covers transportation costs associated with hauling livestock to feed sources This includes places where:  * Drought intensity is D2 for eight consecutive weeks as indicated by the [S. Drought Monitor](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fdroughtmonitor.unl.edu%2F%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=04%7C01%7C%7C14036ef6d4654220123f08da1bd69579%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637852905829916216%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=fcHkVeyoi86Bhl79rEwYiHkDIZUdJHQQJTFfnfu0rUQ%3D&reserved=0); or
* Drought intensity is D3 or greater.

Additionally, FSA has updated ELAP policy to also cover water hauling in areas experiencing D2 for eight consecutive weeks, lowering the drought intensity threshold (previously D3) triggering the availability of this financial assistance. **Eligibility** To be eligible for ELAP assistance, livestock must be intended for grazing and producers must have incurred feed or livestock transportation costs on or after Jan. 1, 2021. Although producers will self-certify losses and expenses to FSA, producers are encouraged to maintain good records and retain receipts and related documentation in the event these documents are requested for review by the local FSA County Committee.   **Payment Calculations** USDA will reimburse eligible ranchers 60% of livestock transportation costs above what would have been incurred in a normal year. Producers qualifying as underserved (socially disadvantaged, limited resource, beginning or military veteran) will be reimbursed for 90% of the feed transportation cost above what would have been incurred in a normal year.  USDA uses a national cost formula to determine reimbursement costs that will not include the first 25 miles and distances exceeding 1,000 transportation miles. The calculation will also exclude the normal cost to transport hay or feed if the producer normally purchases some feed.  For 2021, the initial cost formula of $6.60 per mile will be used (before the percentage is applied).   **Online Decision Tool** Producers can use the updated ELAP Feed Livestock Transportation Producer Tool to help producers document and estimate payments to cover both feed and livestock transportation costs caused by drought. The tool (a Microsoft Excel workbook) and other resources are available at fsa.usda.gov/elap. Final payments may vary depending on eligibility. Eligible ranchers should contact their FSA county office to apply for ELAP assistance. To simplify the application process, ranchers can print or email payment estimates generated by the online tool for submission to FSA. The deadline to request ELAP assistance for hauling livestock to forage in 2021 is June 30, 2022.  The deadline to request all ELAP assistance for 2022 calendar year losses will be Jan. 31, 2023. **More Information** Additional USDA disaster assistance information can be found on farmers.gov, including USDA resources specifically for producer impacted by [drought](https://www.farmers.gov/protection-recovery/drought?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery) and [wildfire](https://www.farmers.gov/protection-recovery/wildfire?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery) and the [Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool](https://www.farmers.gov/node/28989?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery), [Disaster-at-a-Glance fact sheet](https://www.farmers.gov/sites/default/files/2020-04/FSA_DisasterAssistance_at_a_glance_brochure_.pdf?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery) and [Farm Loan Discovery Tool](https://www.farmers.gov/fund/farm-loan-discovery-tool?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery). For FSA and Natural Resources Conservation Service programs, producers should contact their local [USDA Service Center](http://www.farmers.gov/service-center-locator?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery). For assistance with a crop insurance claim, producers and landowners should contact their [crop insurance agent](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fpublic.rma.usda.gov%2FAipListing%2FInsuranceProviders%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=04%7C01%7C%7C14036ef6d4654220123f08da1bd69579%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637852905829916216%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=tt1ItsowuOnKiU%2BS6P7PR1kTWrH01tl%2FrXWlNg%2F2PIU%3D&reserved=0).   Current Interest Rates for April* [Commodity Loans](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2Fprograms-and-services%2Fprice-support%2Fcommodity-loans%2Findex%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=04%7C01%7C%7C14036ef6d4654220123f08da1bd69579%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637852905829916216%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=RwHJAZsMPh%2FQFfz9SoAaSP3IJAT0ElottordpKQKDLw%3D&reserved=0) (less than one year disbursed): 2.125 %
* [Farm Storage Facility Loans](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2Fprograms-and-services%2Fprice-support%2Ffacility-loans%2Ffarm-storage%2Findex%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=04%7C01%7C%7C14036ef6d4654220123f08da1bd69579%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637852905829916216%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=QSqcBYkbWQDO4IM8Q1MMpI1FmS9zY9vq8zsy%2FY91z9M%3D&reserved=0):

               Three-year loan terms: 1.875%               Five-year loan terms: 1.875%               Seven-year loan terms: 2.000%               Ten-year loan terms: 2.000%               Twelve-year loan terms: 2.125%* [Sugar Storage Facility Loans](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2Fprograms-and-services%2Fprice-support%2Ffacility-loans%2Fsugar-storage%2Findex%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=04%7C01%7C%7C14036ef6d4654220123f08da1bd69579%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637852905829916216%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=MKBpgHF6oy1OQqnOH53JK8RN35p9dUjn%2BQjAbN4vGww%3D&reserved=0) (15 years): 2.250
* [Farm Operating Loans](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2Fprograms-and-services%2Ffarm-loan-programs%2Ffarm-operating-loans%2Findex%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=04%7C01%7C%7C14036ef6d4654220123f08da1bd69579%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637852905829916216%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=i28OfxGGUPfqZJZcA1X1tw5H%2FMuPq4MaDCJ8JwPk5Pc%3D&reserved=0) (Direct): 2.750%
* [Farm Ownership Loans](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2Fprograms-and-services%2Ffarm-loan-programs%2Ffarm-ownership-loans%2Findex%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=04%7C01%7C%7C14036ef6d4654220123f08da1bd69579%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637852905829916216%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=ORckErHACXZjYLfe3%2FjfX5cPjuyVEwtYDc%2FsEs5aBIA%3D&reserved=0) (Direct): 3.250 %
* [Farm Ownership Loans](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2Fprograms-and-services%2Ffarm-loan-programs%2Ffarm-ownership-loans%2Findex%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=04%7C01%7C%7C14036ef6d4654220123f08da1bd69579%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637852905829916216%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=ORckErHACXZjYLfe3%2FjfX5cPjuyVEwtYDc%2FsEs5aBIA%3D&reserved=0) (Down Payment): 1.500%
* [Emergency Loan](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2Fprograms-and-services%2Ffarm-loan-programs%2Femergency-farm-loans%2Findex%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=04%7C01%7C%7C14036ef6d4654220123f08da1bd69579%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637852905829916216%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=9wVatAk1tm29A4omjGNXzrYFna4pOcDD%2BhEEUj01yYY%3D&reserved=0) (Amount of Actual Loss): 3.750%

Important DatesApr. 29 - Spot Market Hog Pandemic Program (SMHPP) deadline extendedMay 13 **-**Grassland Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) enrollment deadlineMay 16 - Extended Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) and Emergency Forest               Restoration Program (EFRP) Sign-up deadlines. “(In Applicable Parishes)”May 31 - Deadline to apply for 2021 Marketing Assistance Loans (MAL)June 1 - Status Date for determination of Minor Child and Change in Farming OperationJuly 15- Acreage reporting deadline for spring seeded crops.Aug. 1 – Deadline to request Farm reconstitutionsAug. 5  - Producers may apply for CLEAR30 through August 5, 2022FSA now offers SMS texting; receive text message alerts on your cell phone regarding important deadlines, reporting requirements and updates. Contact your local FSA Office for more information.All USDA Service Centers in Louisiana are currently closed to visitors because of the pandemic, but Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) staff continue to work with agricultural producers via phone, email, and other digital tools.Call your Service Center to schedule an appointment. You can find contact information at [farmers.gov/service-locator](https://www.farmers.gov/working-with-us/service-center-locator?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery). |
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