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## State Executive Director Comments

USDA began issuing Pandemic Assistance Revenue Program (PARP) payments on December 13. These payments help producers who suffered a decrease in allowable gross revenue due to the COVID-19 pandemic for the 2020 calendar year. If you applied for the program, please check your bank account to ensure your payment was received. Contact your [local FSA office](#) if you have questions regarding this program or your potential payment.

MN FSA is excited to work with [Renewing the Countryside](#) and other partners to enrich urban agriculture in the Twin Cities metropolitan area through three new grant opportunities. These will include microgrants ranging from \$200 to \$40,000 per grant for individual or community gardens/farms, organizations that support urban farmers or gardeners, and [People's Gardens](#).

The application period for these grant programs will open in early January 2024. To be contacted with application materials and instructions for applying, you can enter your contact information on the [Grant Announcement List](#). Microgrants will be awarded in the spring of 2024.

USDA is accepting applications for 40 Climate Change Fellows to assist in implementation clean energy projects. Three of these positions will report to USDA Rural Development's national office, and two fellows will be based in Minnesota. To find out more, visit the [USDA Climate Change Fellows Program](#) website. Applications can be made at this [Job Announcement](#).

Wishing you all a very happy New Year as we ring in 2024!



Respectfully,

Whitney Place, State Executive Director

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## **Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage Programs Receive 2018 Farm Bill One Year Extension, Farmers Can Now Enroll for the 2024 Crop Year**

*The deadline is March 15, 2024.*



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced that agricultural producers can now enroll in the Farm Service Agency's (FSA) [Agriculture Risk Coverage \(ARC\) and Price Loss Coverage \(PLC\)](#) programs for the 2024 crop year. Producers can enroll and make election changes for the 2024 crop year starting Dec. 18, 2023. The deadline to complete enrollment and any election change is March 15, 2024.

On Nov. 16, 2023, President Biden signed into law H.R. 6363, the *Further Continuing Appropriations and Other Extensions Act, 2024* (Pub. L. 118-22), which extended the *Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018* (Pub. L. 115-334), more commonly known as the 2018 Farm Bill, through September 30, 2024. This extension allows authorized programs, including ARC and PLC, to continue operating.

### **2024 Elections and Enrollment**

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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 2024 are optional, producers must enroll through a signed contract each year. Also, if a producer has a multi-year contract on the farm it will continue for 2024 unless an election change is made.

If producers do not submit their election revision by the March 15, 2024, deadline, their election remains the same as their 2023 election for commodities on the farm. Farm owners cannot enroll in either program unless they have a share interest in the cropland.

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 grain rice, safflower seed, seed cotton, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat.

### **2022 Crop Year Payments**

This fall, FSA issued payments totaling more than \$267 million to agricultural producers who enrolled in the 2022 ARC-CO option and the ARC ARC-IC option for covered commodities that triggered a payment. Payments through the PLC option did not trigger for the 2022 crop year.

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. These payments help mitigate fluctuations in either revenue or prices for certain crops. Payments for crops that may trigger for the 2023 crop year will be issued in the fall of 2024.

### **Crop Insurance Considerations**

ARC and PLC are part of a broader USDA safety net that also includes crop insurance and marketing assistance loans.

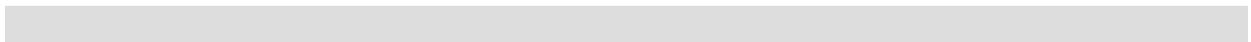
Producers are reminded that ARC and PLC elections and enrollments can impact eligibility for some crop insurance products.

Producers on farms with a PLC election can purchase Supplemental Coverage Option (SCO) through their Approved Insurance Provider; however, producers on farms where ARC is the election are ineligible for SCO on their planted acres for that crop on that farm.

Unlike SCO, the Enhanced Coverage Option (ECO) is unaffected by an ARC election. Producers may add ECO regardless of the 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 (STAX) on their planted cotton acres for that farm.

### **Web-Based Decision Tools**



Many universities offer web-based decision tools to help producers make informed, educated decisions using crop data specific to their respective farming operations. Producers are encouraged to use the tool of their choice to support their ARC and PLC elections.

### More Information

For more information on ARC and PLC, producers can visit the [ARC and PLC webpage](#) or contact their local [USDA Service Center](#). Producers can also make elections and complete enrollment [online with level 2 eAuth](#).

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## Reminder: Discrimination Financial Assistance Program



22007apply.gov

USDA continues to accept applications for assistance through the Discrimination Financial Assistance Program for Minnesota farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners who experienced discrimination in USDA farm lending programs prior to January 2021. The application process will close on January 13, 2024. Borrowers have the option to apply for assistance online via [22007apply.gov](https://22007apply.gov) or through a paper-based form.

Details about the program, including an application and e-filing portal, are available at [22007apply.gov](https://22007apply.gov). The website includes an English and Spanish language application that applicants can download or submit via an e-filing portal, information on how to obtain technical assistance in-person or virtually, and additional resources and details about the

program.

Applicants can also call a free call center at 1-800-721-0970 or visit one of several dozen brick-and-mortar offices the program has set up around the country. Locations are provided on the program website and vendors will update the local events schedule with more information as it becomes available.

Several entities are involved in the Discrimination Financial Assistance Program, with varying roles and responsibilities. The National Administrator and Regional Hubs are responsible for conducting outreach, assisting with the financial assistance application process, processing applications, managing program call centers, and operating local offices. Additional outreach and application support is provided by trusted community groups. These groups include [AgrAbility](#), the [Farmer Veteran Coalition](#), [Farmers' Legal Action Group](#), [Federation of Southern Cooperatives](#), [Intertribal Agriculture Council](#), [Land Loss Prevention Program](#), [National Young Farmers Coalition](#), and [Rural Coalition](#).

It is important to note that filing an application is FREE and does not require a lawyer.

If you want to get weekly updates on the program's events and progress, you can go to <https://22007apply.gov>, and subscribe to a weekly newsletter.

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## Minnesota FSA is Hiring in Multiple Locations

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) is an exciting and rewarding place to start, build, and/or continue your career. Be part of our team and support the well-being of Minnesota agriculture and the American public.

FSA's diverse culture and benefits allow for a healthy balance between your career and home life. In addition to a generous salary, FSA offers a friendly and professional working environment with a diverse workforce, flexible hours/work schedules, and other family-friendly benefits such as: paid vacation and sick leave, paid holidays, retirement and supplemental savings plan, a wide array of health, dental, vision, and life insurance plans, flexible spending accounts, twelve weeks of paid parental leave with FMLA eligibility, and long-term care insurance. Working for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will afford you the opportunity to contribute to projects that positively impact the lives of over 300 million people. Explore a career with the USDA at [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov).

New job openings are posted on a regular basis. Interested individuals can search for career opportunities based upon keywords and/or specific locations as well as create search profiles and job announcement notifications. Currently, Minnesota FSA is seeking candidates to perform work in support of Minnesota agriculture and farmers in a number of locations across the state. Individuals who are interested in applying for these job opportunities will need to apply on-line at [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov). Applicants may enter the appropriate job announcement number below into the keyword search or click on the applicable link(s).

### **Program Technician:**

- **Moorhead, MN** - Clay County  
[FSACO-12246625-24-MN-KM](#)  
Application period: 12/26/2023 to 1/16/2024
- **Blue Earth, MN** - Faribault County  
[FSACO-12249578-24-MN-KM](#)  
Application period: 12/26/2023 to 1/16/2024

**Questions?** Please visit the job posting linked above for additional information.

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