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## State Executive Director Comments

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At Minnesota FSA we're hoping all those in the field are having a safe and productive harvest, despite the rain that moved into much of the region late this week. We continue to monitor disaster conditions across the state.

The week of October 1-7 we celebrated National 4-H Week. 4-H is the largest youth development organization in the United States, serving 6 million 4-H'ers across the country. [Minnesota 4-H](#) is an important contributor to developing Minnesota's next generation of farmers and agricultural professionals. FSA supports this work through [Youth Loans](#) that can help finance youth agricultural projects up to \$5,000.



The 18<sup>th</sup> annual [Emerging Farmers Conference](#) (EFC) will be held in Mounds View, Minnesota on November 3-4, 2023. The conference is designed by farmers, for farmers, with a focus on serving emerging food growers, particularly Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) farmers, New American farmers, and women farmers. The EFC will share practical information and examples of farming success through sessions, hands-on demonstrations, story sharing, networking opportunities, and resources from agriculture and research professionals. The conference is free to farmers and growers! The link to register can be found [here](#).

USDA is announcing a new crop insurance program designed for agricultural producers who use controlled environments in their operations. The new [Controlled Environment program](#) from USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) is specifically for plants grown in fully enclosed controlled environments and provides coverage against plant diseases subject to destruction orders. Available beginning in the 2024 crop year, the Controlled Environment program provides a risk management resource for urban, specialty crop, and organic producers who often use controlled environments as a major part of their operations. The first sales closing date is December 1, 2023.

October 12 was National Farmer's Day. While we thank our Minnesota farmers every day, this day offered a moment to pause and honor the hard-working people and families that supply food, fuel, and fiber across the world. Farmers set an example with their endless hard work. Not only do they provide the groceries on our tables, but they also contribute to our economy in numerous ways. From manufacturing, marketing, and tourism, farmers keep communities going strong. See how FSA can assist in achieving your agricultural goals on our [website](#). Thank you, farmers.

Respectfully,

Whitney Place, State Executive Director

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## **USDA Extends Milk Loss Program Assistance Deadline to Oct. 30**

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The U.S Department of Agriculture (USDA) is extending the application deadline for the [Milk Loss Program \(MLP\)](#) to Monday, Oct. 30, 2023, allowing more time for eligible dairy farmers to apply for much-needed, weather-related disaster recovery assistance.

Administered by USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA), MLP compensates dairy producers who, because of qualifying weather events, dumped or removed milk without compensation from the commercial milk market in calendar years 2020, 2021 and 2022. Eligible causes of loss also include consequences of these weather events, such as power outages, impassable roads and infrastructure losses. FSA opened MLP enrollment on Sept. 11, 2023; the original MLP deadline was Oct. 16, 2023.

## How to Apply

To apply for MLP, producers must submit:

- FSA-376, *Milk Loss Program Application*
- Milk marketing statement from the:
  - Month prior to the month milk was removed or dumped.
  - Affected month.
- Detailed written statement of milk removal circumstances, including the weather event type and geographic scope, what transportation limitations occurred and any information on what was done with the removed milk.
- Any other information required by the regulation.

If not previously filed with FSA, applicants must also submit all the following items within 60 days of the MLP application deadline:

- Form AD-2047, *Customer Data Worksheet*.
- Form CCC-902, *Farm Operating Plan* for an individual or legal entity.
- Form CCC-901, *Member Information for Legal Entities* (if applicable).
- Form FSA-510, *Request for an Exception to the \$125,000 Payment Limitation for Certain Programs* (if applicable).
- Form CCC-860, *Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, Beginning and Veteran Farmer or Rancher Certification*, (if applicable).
- A highly erodible land conservation (sometimes referred to as HELC) and wetland conservation certification (Form AD-1026 *Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELIC) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification*) for the MLP producer and applicable affiliates.

Most producers, especially those who have previously participated in FSA programs, will likely have these required forms already on file. But those who are uncertain or want to confirm the status of their forms can contact FSA at their local [USDA Service Center](#).

For more information on eligibility and payments, view the [MLP fact sheet](#).

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## Share Your Harvesting Experience for Farmers.gov's #Harvest2023 campaign



*Share what you're harvesting this season on Farmers.gov social media.*

As America's farmers harvest the crops that feed, clothe, and fuel our world, let's fill the Farmers.gov social media feed with their stories about this year's harvest season. We'd also like to see how it's going for farmers that participated in our #Plant2023 campaign in the spring.

To share your experience on @FarmersGov social media, follow these steps:

- Collect photos of what's happening on your operation as you harvest.
- If you're comfortable, we'd love to see the people that make it happen, like friends and family.
- Write an email to [FP.Social@usda.gov](mailto:FP.Social@usda.gov), attach your photos/video, and tell us:
  - Your name, the location of your operation, and the name of your operation
  - Your operation's Facebook, Instagram, and/or Twitter pages, if you have them.
  - What are you harvesting this year?
  - Where does your harvest go? How is it used?
  - What are your personal thoughts on this year's harvest season?

Please note that by submitting your photo/video, you are granting USDA permission to use these materials for outreach and education purposes.

Remember to follow @FarmersGov on [Facebook](#), [X](#) (formerly known as Twitter), and [Instagram](#), and we look forward to sharing your story!

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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:**

- **Owatonna, MN** – Steele County  
[FSACO-12146017-23-MN-KM](#)  
Application period: 10/02/2023 to 10/16/2023
- **Glencoe, MN** – McLeod/Carver County  
[FSACO-12146062-23-MN-KM](#)  
Application period: 10/02/2023 to 10/16/2023
- **Austin, MN** – Mower County (with 15% recruitment incentive)  
[FSACO-12145908-23-MN-KM](#)  
Application period: 10/02/2023 to 10/23/2023
- **Preston, MN** – Fillmore County  
[FSACO-12155225-24-MN-KM](#)  
Application period: 10/10/2023 to 10/24/2023
- **Roseau, MN** – Roseau County  
[FSACO-12161823-24-MN-KM](#)  
Application period: 10/16/2023 to 10/30/2023

## **Farm Loan Analyst:**

- **Marshall, MN** – Lyon County  
[FSA-24-12160322-DE-MN-MM](#)  
Application period: 10/10/2023 to 10/24/2023

### **County Executive Director:**

- **Hallock, MN** – Kittson County  
[FSACO-12156250-24-MN-KM](#)  
Application Period: 10/10/2023 to 10/31/2023

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

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## **Dairy Margin Coverage Program Provides Critical Support for Dairy Operations**



The August milk margin triggered the eighth consecutive payment for dairy producers who obtained [Dairy Margin Coverage](#) (DMC) for the 2023 program year. August's income over feed margin is \$6.46 per hundredweight (cwt.) with projected DMC payments totaling \$120 million. To date, including the projected August payments, dairy producers have received more than \$1.2 billion in much needed economic support for 2023 and margin forecasts indicate the likelihood of more to come before the end of the calendar year.

DMC is a voluntary risk management program administered by USDA's [Farm Service Agency](#) (FSA) that offers protection to dairy producers when the difference between the all-milk price and the average feed price (the margin) falls below a certain dollar amount selected by the producer.

### **Additional Dairy Assistance**

DMC complements other assistance available to dairy producers, including the [Milk Loss Program](#) (MLP) and the [Organic Dairy Marketing Assistance Program](#) (ODMAP).

MLP covers milk that was dumped or removed, without compensation, from the commercial milk market due to qualifying weather events and the consequences of those weather events that inhibited delivery or storage of milk (e.g., power outages, impassable roads, infrastructure losses, etc.) during calendar years 2020, 2021 and 2022.

USDA recently announced a second round of payments for dairy producers through ODMAP, providing an additional \$5 million to help dairy producers with marketing costs to mitigate market volatility, higher input and transportation costs and unstable feed supply and prices that have created unique hardships in the organic dairy industry. FSA has already paid out \$15 million in the first round of payments for eligible producers, bringing total ODMAP payments to \$20 million.

### **More Information**

To learn more about FSA programs, producers can contact their local [USDA Service Center](#). Producers can also prepare maps for acreage reporting as well as manage farm loans

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and view other farm records data and customer information by [logging into their farmers.gov account](#). Producers without an account can [sign up](#) today.

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](#).

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## Progression Lending from FSA

Farm Service Agency (FSA) farm loans are considered progression lending. Unlike loans from a commercial lender, FSA loans are intended to be temporary in nature. Our goal is to help you graduate to commercial credit, and our farm loan staff is available to help borrowers through training and credit counseling.

The FSA team will help borrowers identify their goals to ensure financial success. FSA staff will advise borrowers on developing strategies and a plan to meet your goals and graduate to commercial credit. FSA borrowers are responsible for the success of their farming operation, but FSA staff will help in an advisory role, providing the tools necessary to help you achieve your operational goals and manage your finances.

For more information on FSA farm loan programs, contact your local USDA Service Center or visit [fsa.usda.gov](#).

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## Malted Grains and Maple Syrup Eligible for Farm Storage Facility Loans

Malted small grains and maple syrup are now eligible for Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL) through the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA).

FSFLs provide low-interest financing to help you build or upgrade storage facilities and to purchase portable (new or used) structures, equipment and storage and handling trucks.

Eligible malted small grains include barley, oats, rice, rye and wheat. Maple sap is used to produce maple syrup.

The low-interest funds can be used for:



- bottler or filling systems for maple syrup, excluding containers
- equipment to improve, maintain, or monitor the quality of stored FSFL commodities, such as cleaners, moisture testers, heat detectors, along with a proposed storage facility
- handling and drying equipment determined by the County Committee to be needed and essential to the proper functioning of a storage system
- electrical equipment, such as pumps, lighting, motors, and wiring, integral to the proper operation of the storage and handling equipment, excluding installing electric service to the electrical meter.

FSFLs are not available for the actual processing of the small grain into the malted commodity or maple sap into maple syrup. Additionally, purchased commodities are not eligible for FSFLs.

The following storage and handling equipment is ineligible for FSFLs:

- boiling equipment
- feed handling and processing equipment
- production and feed facilities
- structures of a temporary nature not having a useful life of the term of the loan
- maple sap tubing and pumping systems.

Loans up to \$50,000 can be secured by a promissory note/security agreement and loans exceeding \$100,000 require additional security.

You do not need to demonstrate the lack of commercial credit availability to apply. The loans are designed to assist a diverse range of farming operations, including small and mid-sized businesses, new farmers, operations supplying local food and farmers markets, non-traditional farm products, and underserved producers.

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

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## Report Banking Changes to FSA

Farm Service Agency (FSA) program payments are issued electronically into your bank account. In order to receive timely payments, you need to notify your FSA servicing office if you close your account or if your bank information is changed for any reason (such as your financial institution merging or being purchased). Payments can be delayed if FSA is not notified of changes to account and bank routing numbers.

For some programs, payments are not made until the following year. For example, payments for crop year 2019 through the Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage program aren't paid until 2020. If the bank account was closed due to the death of an individual or

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dissolution of an entity or partnership before the payment was issued, please notify your local FSA office as soon as possible to claim your payment.

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## Apply for Livestock Forage Losses



Producers in Minnesota are eligible to apply for the 2023 Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) benefits on small grain, native pasture, improved pasture, annual ryegrass, and forage sorghum.

LFP provides compensation if you suffer grazing losses for covered livestock due to drought on privately owned or cash leased land or fire on federally managed land.

County committees can only accept LFP applications after notification is received by the National Office of qualifying drought or if a federal agency prohibits producers from grazing normal permitted livestock on federally managed lands due to qualifying fire. You must complete a CCC-853 and provide the required supporting documentation.

For additional Information about LFP, including eligible livestock and fire criteria, contact your local USDA Service Center or visit [fsa.usda.gov](https://fsa.usda.gov).

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## Reminders for FSA Direct and Guaranteed Borrowers with Real Estate Security

Farm loan borrowers who have pledged real estate as security for their Farm Service Agency (FSA) direct or guaranteed loans are responsible for maintaining loan collateral. Borrowers

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must obtain prior consent or approval from FSA or the guaranteed lender for any transaction that affects real estate security. These transactions include, but are not limited to:

- Leases of any kind
- Easements of any kind
- Subordinations
- Partial releases
- Sales

Failure to meet or follow the requirements in the loan agreement, promissory note, and other security instruments could lead to nonmonetary default which could jeopardize your current and future loans.

It is critical that borrowers keep an open line of communication with their FSA loan staff or guaranteed lender when it comes to changes in their operation. For more information on borrower responsibilities, read [Your FSA Farm Loan Compass](#).

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## Environmental Review Required Before Project Implementation



The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires Federal agencies to consider all potential environmental impacts for federally funded projects before the project is approved.

For all Farm Service Agency (FSA) programs, an environmental review must be completed before actions are approved, such as site preparation or ground disturbance. These programs include, **but are not limited to**, the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP), Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program and farm loans. If project implementation begins before FSA has completed an environmental review, the request will be denied. Although there are exceptions regarding the Stafford Act and emergencies, it's important to wait until you receive written approval of your project proposal before starting any actions.

Applications cannot be approved until FSA has copies of all permits and plans. Contact your local FSA office early in your planning process to determine what level of environmental review is required for your program application so that it can be completed timely.

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## Obtaining Payments Due to Deceased Producers

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In order to claim a Farm Service Agency (FSA) payment on behalf of a deceased producer, all program conditions for the payment must have been met before the applicable producer's date of death.

If a producer earned a FSA payment prior to his or her death, the following is the order of precedence for the representatives of the producer:

- administrator or executor of the estate
- the surviving spouse
- surviving sons and daughters, including adopted children
- surviving father and mother
- surviving brothers and sisters
- heirs of the deceased person who would be entitled to payment according to the State law

For FSA to release the payment, the legal representative of the deceased producer must file a form FSA-325 to claim the payment for themselves or an estate. The county office will verify that the application, contract, loan agreement, or other similar form requesting payment issuance, was signed by the applicable deadline by the deceased or a person legally authorized to act on their behalf at that time of application.

If the application, contract or loan agreement form was signed by someone other than the deceased participant, FSA will determine whether the person submitting the form has the legal authority to submit the form.

Payments will be issued to the respective representative's name using the deceased program participant's tax identification number. Payments made to representatives are subject to offset regulations for debts owed by the deceased.

FSA is not responsible for advising persons in obtaining legal advice on how to obtain program benefits that may be due to a participant who has died, disappeared or who has been declared incompetent.

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## USDA Reminds Minnesota Livestock Producers of Available Drought Assistance

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds drought-impacted producers in State that they may be eligible for assistance through the [Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program \(ELAP\)](#).

For eligible livestock in qualifying counties, ELAP provides financial assistance for:



- the transportation of water to livestock;
- the above normal cost of mileage for transporting feed to livestock; and
- the above normal cost of transporting livestock to forage/grazing acres.  
*\*Hauling livestock both ways starting in 2023, one haul per animal reimbursement and no payment for “empty miles.”*

Eligible livestock include cattle, bison, goats and sheep, among others, that are maintained for commercial use and located in a county where qualifying drought conditions occur. A county must have had D2 severe drought intensity on the [U.S. Drought Monitor](#) for eight consecutive weeks during the normal grazing period, or D3 or D4 drought intensity at any time during the normal grazing period. Producers must have risk in both eligible livestock and eligible grazing land in an eligible county to qualify for ELAP assistance.

### **Transporting Water**

Producers must be transporting water to eligible livestock on eligible grazing land where adequate livestock watering systems or facilities were in place before the drought occurred and where water transportation is not normally required. ELAP covers costs associated with personal labor, equipment, hired labor, and contracted water transportation fees. Cost of the water itself is not covered. ELAP covers \$0.07 per gallon to transport water.

### **Transporting Feed**

ELAP provides financial assistance to livestock producers who incur above normal expenses for transporting feed to livestock during drought. The payment formula excludes the first 25 miles and any mileage over 1,000 miles. The reimbursement rate is 60% of the cost above what would normally would have been incurred during the same time period in a normal (non-drought) year.

Livestock feed that is transported to livestock located on land enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is eligible if the producer has an approved conservation plan with acceptable grazing practices developed in coordination with the Natural Resources Conservation Service

The payment rate to transport feed is \$6.60/ loaded mile for expenses above what would have normally been incurred.

### **Transporting Livestock**

ELAP provides financial assistance to livestock producers who are hauling livestock to a new location for feed resources due to insufficient feed or grazing in drought-impacted areas. As with transporting feed, the payment formula for transporting livestock excludes the first 25 miles and any mileage over 1,000 miles. The reimbursement rate is 60% of the costs above what would normally have been incurred during the same time period in a normal (non-drought) year.

The payment rate to transport livestock is \$6.60/loaded mile for expenses above what would have normally been incurred and covers hauling livestock one-way, one haul per animal reimbursement and no payment for “empty miles.”

An [online tool](#) is now available to help ranchers document and estimate payments to cover feed and livestock transportation costs caused by drought.

## Reporting Losses

Producers should contact FSA as soon as the loss of water or feed resources are known.

For ELAP eligibility, documentation of expenses is critical. Producers should maintain records and receipts associated with the costs of transporting water to eligible livestock, the costs of transporting feed to eligible livestock, the costs of additional feed purchases, and the costs of transporting eligible livestock to forage or other grazing acres.

## More Information

Producers interested in ELAP assistance can contact their local [USDA Service Center](#) to learn more or to apply for programs.



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To find contact information for your local USDA Farm Service  
Agency Office go to: [www.fsa.usda.gov/mn](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mn)

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**Minnesota State Committee:**

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Hannah Bernhardt, Committee Member  
Kurt Blomgren, Committee Member  
Lisa Brunner, Committee Member  
Tim Velde, Committee Member

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