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*Find contact information for your local USDA Service Center at [farmers.gov/service-locator](https://farmers.gov/service-locator). Producers can also learn more about how to leverage digital tools by visiting <https://www.farmers.gov/mydocs>.*

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## Montana FSA Program Dates/Deadlines

USDA in Montana reminds agricultural producers of important Farm Service Agency (FSA) program dates. Contact your local service center to apply and with any questions. Visit online at [farmers.gov](https://farmers.gov) and [fsa.usda.gov/mt](https://fsa.usda.gov/mt).

**July 15:** Deadline for FSA Maps - 2022 acreage reporting/crop certification for annually seeded spring crops, spring seeded alfalfa seed, forage seeding, Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), perennial forage not covered under the NAP, and all other crops not required to be reported by a previous reporting date. *This is the final date that FSA can accept late-filed 2021 reports for these crops.*

**Aug. 31:** Last day of summer haying of CRP (requires prior approval).

**Oct. 1, 2022:** Deadline to enroll in Continuous CRP programs, including SAFE

**Oct. 31, 2022:** Deadline to enroll in Organic and Transitional Education Certification Program (OTECP) and Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP)

**Nov. 1, 2022:** Last day of CRP grazing (requires prior approval).

**Nov. 15, 2022:** Deadline for FSA Maps - 2023 acreage reporting deadline for apiculture, fall wheat (hard red winter), and all other fall-seeded small grains. *Please note that this is the final date that FSA can accept late-filed 2022 reports for these crops.*

**Jan. 3, 2023:** Honey covered under NAP (or 30 days after placement of colonies)

**Jan. 16, 2023:** Established stand alfalfa seed, fall alfalfa seed, and cherries for acreage reporting

**Jan. 30, 2023:** Deadline to request all ELAP assistance for 2022 calendar year losses.

**Jan. 30, 2023:** Deadline to request LFP assistance for 2022 calendar year losses.

ELAP notice of loss must be filed within **30 days** of when loss is apparent for **livestock and farm-raised fish** losses.

ELAP notice of loss must be filed within **15 days** of when loss is apparent for **honeybee** losses.

LIP notice of loss must be filed within **30 days** of when the loss is apparent.

## USDA to Mail Additional Pre-Filled Applications to Producers Impacted by 2020, 2021 Disasters

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced another installment (phase) in assistance to commodity and specialty crop producers impacted by natural disaster events in 2020 and 2021. More than 18,000 producers will soon receive new or updated pre-filled disaster applications to offset eligible crop losses. Approximately \$6.4 billion has already been distributed to 165,000 producers through USDA's Farm Service Agency's (FSA) Emergency Relief Program (ERP).

FSA will begin mailing pre-filled applications in late August to producers who have potentially eligible losses and:

- Received crop insurance indemnities for qualifying 2020 and 2021 disaster events after May 2, 2022.
- Received crop insurance indemnities associated with Nursery, Supplemental Coverage Option (SCO), Stacked Income Protection Plan (STAX), Enhanced Coverage Option (ECO) and Margin Protection (MP) policies.
- New primary policyholders not included in the initial insured producer Phase 1 mailing from May 25, 2022, because their claim records had not been filled.
- Certain 2020 prevent plant losses related to qualifying 2020 disaster events that had only been recorded in crop insurance records as related to 2019 adverse weather events and, as such, were not previously provided in applications sent earlier this year.
- New Substantial Beneficial Interest (SBI) records, including SBIs where tax identification numbers were corrected.

Producers are expected to receive assistance direct deposited into their bank account within three business days after they sign and return the pre-filled application to the FSA county office and the county office enters the application into the system.

Before applying any program payment factors or eligibility criteria, it is estimated that this next installment (phase) may generate about \$756 million in assistance.

### Emergency Relief Payments to Date

This emergency relief under ERP complements ERP assistance recently provided to more than 165,000 producers who had received crop insurance indemnities and Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) payments for qualifying losses. USDA has processed more than 255,000 applications for ERP, and to date, has made approximately \$6.4 billion in payments to commodity and specialty crop producers to help offset eligible losses from qualifying 2020 and 2021 natural disasters. Also, earlier this year, staff processed more than 100,000 payments through the Emergency Livestock Relief Program (ELRP) and paid eligible producers more than \$601.3 million for 2021 grazing losses within days of the program announcement.

### Phase Two

The second phase of both ERP and ELRP will be aimed at filling gaps and provide assistance to producers who did not participate in or receive payments through the existing risk management programs that are being leveraged for phase one implementation. USDA will keep producers and stakeholders informed as program details are made available.

### More Information

In addition, on Aug. 18, 2022, USDA published a technical correction to the [Notice of Funds Availability](#) for ERP and ELRP to clarify how income from the sale of farm equipment and the provision of production inputs and services to farmers, ranchers, foresters, and farm operations are to be considered in the calculation of

average adjusted gross farm income. Producers whose average adjusted gross farm income is at least 75% of the producer's the average Adjusted Gross Income can gain access to a higher payment limitation.

ERP and the previously announced ELRP are authorized by the *Extending Government Funding and Delivering Emergency Assistance Act*, which President Biden signed into law in 2021. The law provided \$10 billion to help agricultural producers impacted by wildfires, droughts, hurricanes, winter storms and other eligible disasters experienced during calendar years 2020 and 2021.

For more information on ERP and ELRP eligibility, program provisions for historically underserved producers as well as Frequently Asked Questions, producers can visit [FSA's Emergency Relief webpage](#). A [new public-facing dashboard](#) on the ERP webpage has information on ERP payments that can be sorted by crop type – specialty or non-specialty– specific commodities and state. FSA will update the dashboard every Monday.

Additional USDA disaster assistance information can be found on [farmers.gov](#), including the [Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool](#), [Disaster-at-a-Glance fact sheet](#) and [Farm Loan Discovery Tool](#). For FSA and Natural Resources Conservation Service programs, producers should contact their local [USDA Service Center](#). For assistance with a crop insurance claim, producers and landowners should contact their [crop insurance agent](#).

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## NRCS Sets Conservation Program Funding Application Date for October 28

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Montana is accepting applications for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). To be considered for funding in the current cycle, producers and landowners should apply by October 28, 2022.

“NRCS provides funding and technical assistance to help farmers, ranchers, and forestland owners implement conservation practices that improve their environmental and economic sustainability,” said Tom Watson, NRCS State Conservationist for Montana. “Conservation work focused on local outcomes with the support of local partners and land managers achieves meaningful conservation across a landscape. These opportunities are open to ag operations of any scale.”

Conservation funding is available for the following programs and initiatives:

**Conservation Incentive Contracts:** Conservation Incentive Contracts are an option under EQIP, with a focus on climate-smart forestry and agriculture and drought resilience management practices. EQIP-CIC provides financial assistance to adopt conservation activities on working landscapes.

**Community Agriculture:** Building on the high tunnel initiative available in the past, the community agriculture initiative offers an expanded set of conservation practices tailored to the conservation needs of small-scale ag producers.

**Joint Chiefs' Partnership Restoration Projects:** The U.S. Forest Service and NRCS are working together to improve the health of forests and reduce wildfire threats to communities where public forests and grasslands connect to privately owned lands. There are currently four projects in Montana, including the Connecting Fuels Treatments in the Salish Mountains and Whitefish Range Project, Fire Adapted Bitterroot Project, Gallatin Valley Forest Resiliency and Watershed Health Project, and the Libby Surround Project.

**National On-Farm Energy Initiative:** Agricultural producers work with NRCS-approved technical service providers to develop agricultural energy management plans or farm energy audits that assess energy consumption on an operation. NRCS may also provide assistance to implement recommended measures identified in the energy audit through the use of conservation practice standards.

National Organic Initiative: Producers currently certified as organic, transitioning to organic, or National Organic Program exempt will have access to a broad set of conservation practices to assist in treating their resource concerns while fulfilling many of the requirements in an Organic System Plan.

National Water Quality Initiative: This initiative focuses assistance in small watersheds to improve water quality where this is a critical concern. With the help of partners at the local, state and national level, NRCS identified priority watersheds in Montana where on-farm conservation investments will deliver the greatest water quality benefits. The two projects in Montana are located in the Lower Gallatin watershed (Camp and Godfrey Creeks) and the Shields River watershed.

Sage Grouse Initiative: Producers can work with NRCS on three different components to improve sage-grouse habitat. One is a general category to implement prescribed grazing management practices. The others are to seed cropland back to perennial species to improve the connectivity for sage-grouse that depend on large, intact landscapes and the removal of conifers to increase nest success rates.

Targeted Implementation Plans: Montana NRCS targets its investments in very specific areas to achieve clearly defined natural resource goals as identified by local partners. This approach harnesses the power of multiple producers in one area undertaking similar conservation projects to achieve a regional or landscape-scale result. There are nearly 100 local projects currently available in fiscal year 2023.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program: The RCPP promotes coordination of NRCS conservation activities with partners that offer value-added contributions to expand our collective ability to address on-farm, watershed, and regional natural resource concerns. Currently, there are three RCPP land management projects in Montana, including the Big Game Habitat Improvement Project, Northern Great Plains Grassland Conservation Project, and the Gallatin Valley Land Trust project.

EQIP offers financial and technical assistance to eligible participants to install or implement structural and management practices on eligible agricultural land. In Montana, historically underserved participants, including limited resource, and beginning farmers and ranchers, socially disadvantaged, and veteran farmers and ranchers will receive a higher payment rate for eligible conservation practices applied.

The CSP is for working lands. For farmers, ranchers, and forestland owners already taking steps to improve the condition of the land, CSP can help find new ways to meet resource and operation goals. All of the land in a producer's agricultural operation must be enrolled to be eligible for CSP.

This year, the Conservation Planning Workbook will be a required part of the CSP application package. Request a printed copy of the workbook from your local USDA service center.

NRCS accepts conservation program applications year-round; however, applications for the next funding consideration must be submitted by October 28, 2022. Applications made after the cutoff will be considered in the next funding cycle. Additional information is available on the Montana NRCS website at [www.mt.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.mt.nrcs.usda.gov) under the Programs tab or by contacting your [local USDA service center](#).

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## Updates to Crop Insurance Plans Broaden Access for Specialty Crop, Organic, Direct Market and Other Producers

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is improving two of its most comprehensive risk management safety net programs, Whole-Farm Revenue Protection (WFRP) and Micro Farm, making them more accessible to America's agricultural producers. This includes doubling the maximum insurable revenue under WFRP, now \$17 million, more than tripling the size of farm operations eligible for Micro Farm, now \$350,000 and reducing paperwork requirements for WFRP. These improvements are in direct response to feedback

from stakeholders as USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) recognizes the important role these insurance options play for many producers, including specialty crop, organic and direct market producers.

Listening to farmers and ranchers, learning about their needs and increasing access to resources are all priorities for us at RMA," said RMA Administrator Marcia Bungler. "Over the past year and a half, we have rolled out a number of improvements to WFRP, as well as introduced the new Micro Farm program, and through updates to Whole Farm Revenue Protection and Micro Farm, RMA can now help even more local food, direct market, specialty crop and organic producers protect their operations.

### **Whole-Farm Revenue Protection**

The [WFRP](#) program provides protection for all eligible commodities on a farm under one insurance policy. Now, producers can insure up to \$17 million in revenue (formerly \$8.5 million).

Other updates to WFRP include:

- Allowing a producer to report and self-certify yield at the beginning of the year for commodities without other insurance options in a way similar to those with individual crop policies. This will significantly reduce the amount of paperwork required to apply for WFRP.
- Eliminating expense reporting to reduce paperwork burden. In place of expense reporting, WFRP will reduce the expected revenue of commodities a producer is unable to plant to 60%, similar to prevented planting for other programs.

These updates build on others recently made to WFRP, including [expanded coverage and flexibilities for organic producers](#).

### **Micro Farm**

The [Micro Farm program](#), offered through WFRP, provides a risk management safety net for all eligible commodities on a farm under one insurance policy, but on a smaller scale. Now, producers with farm operations up to \$350,000 in approved revenue (formerly \$100,000) can get coverage. RMA introduced the new Micro Farm program in 2021 to better serve direct market and small-scale producers. While the program is well received and feedback has been largely positive, industry partners and small, diversified producers have informed RMA that the current limit is too low to meet the needs of many interested producers. In response, the FCIC approved the increase in size for eligible farm operations.

The updates to WFRP and Micro Farm take effect in crop year 2023.

### **More Information**

Crop insurance is sold and delivered solely through private crop insurance agents. A list of crop insurance agents is available at all USDA Service Centers and online at the [RMA Agent Locator](#). Learn more about crop insurance and the modern farm safety net at [rma.usda.gov](http://rma.usda.gov).

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](http://usda.gov).

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# USDA Announces First Three Lenders for Heirs' Property Relending Program

USDA is announcing that Shared Capital Cooperative, Akiptan, Inc. and the Cherokee Nation Economic Development Trust Authority (CNEDTA), have been approved or conditionally approved as intermediary lenders through the Heirs' Property Relending Program (HPRP). Once HPRP loans with these lenders close, these lenders will help agricultural producers and landowners resolve heirs' land ownership and succession issues. Additionally, USDA encourages more intermediary lenders, including cooperatives, credit unions and nonprofit organizations to apply. More information is at [farmers.gov/heirs/relending](https://farmers.gov/heirs/relending).

Heirs may apply directly to the intermediary lenders for loans to resolve land ownership and succession issues. [Learn more.](#)

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## Low Interest Emergency Physical Loss Loans Available for Producers in Flathead, Lake, Treasure, and Contiguous Counties

Agricultural producers in the counties listed below who lost property due to recent natural disasters are eligible for physical loss loans from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers these loans for losses caused by wildfire that occurred July 29, 2022, and continuing.

FSA is offering these low-interest emergency loans to producers with a qualifying loss. Approval is limited to applicants who suffered severe physical losses only, including the loss of buildings and livestock. The deadline for producers in designated primary and contiguous counties to apply for loans for physical losses is April 19, 2023.

### Primary Counties Eligible:

Flathead, Lake, and Treasure

### Contiguous Areas also Eligible:

Big Horn, Glacier, Lewis and Clark, Lincoln, Missoula, Pondera, Powell, Rosebud, Sanders, Teton and Yellowstone

Physical loss loans can help producers repair or replace damaged or destroyed physical property essential to the success of the agricultural operation, including livestock losses. Examples of property commonly affected include essential farm buildings, fixtures to real estate, equipment, livestock, perennial crops, fruit and nut bearing trees, and harvested or stored crops and hay.

Please contact FSA for more information on loan eligibility and the application process. FSA office information is available at <http://offices.usda.gov>. Additional FSA disaster assistance program information is available at [disaster.fsa.usda.gov](https://disaster.fsa.usda.gov).

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## USDA Invests \$2.2 Million to Help Historically Underserved Producers, Small Farms

USDA's Risk Management Agency is investing more than \$2 million to provide education and training to historically underserved farmers, as well as organic, specialty crop, and livestock producers, and education projects that promote eco-friendly practices. [Learn more.](#)

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## **New Guide Available for Underserved Farmers, Ranchers**

A [new multi-agency guide](#) for USDA assistance for underserved farmers and ranchers is now available. If you are a farmer or rancher and are a minority, woman, veteran, beginning, or limited resource producer, you can use this booklet to learn about assistance and targeted opportunities available to you. This includes programs offered through the Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Risk Management Agency. The guide is also available in Spanish, Hmong, Korean, Vietnamese, Thai and Chinese on [farmers.gov/translations](http://farmers.gov/translations).

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## **USDA to Invest up to \$300 million in New Organic Transition Initiative**

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced details of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) \$300 million investment, including with American Rescue Plan funds, in a new Organic Transition Initiative that will help build new and better markets and streams of income for farmers and producers. Organic production allows producers to hold a unique position in the marketplace and thus take home a greater share of the food dollar.

According to the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, the number of non-certified organic farms actively transitioning to organic production dropped by nearly 71 percent since 2008. Through the comprehensive support provided by this initiative USDA hopes to reverse this trend, opening opportunities for new and beginning farmers and expanding direct consumer access to organic foods through increased production.

The initiative will deliver wrap-around technical assistance, including farmer-to-farmer mentoring; provide direct support through conservation financial assistance and additional crop insurance assistance, and support market development projects in targeted markets.

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), Risk Management Agency (RMA) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) are the primary agencies supporting the Initiative, which will focus on three areas.

### **Transition to Organic Partnership Program**

Through this initiative, USDA aims to ensure that farmers transitioning to organic have the support they need to navigate that transition, including a full supply chain to American consumers who demand organic choices in their supermarkets daily. AMS will build partnership networks in six regions across the United States with trusted local organizations serving direct farmer training, education, and outreach activities. The organizations will connect transitioning farmers with mentors, building paid mentoring networks to share practical insights and advice. Each regional team will also provide community building, including train-the-mentor support; as well as technical assistance, workshops, and field days covering topics including organic production practices, certification, conservation planning, business development (including navigating the supply chain), regulations, and marketing to help transitioning and recently transitioned producers overcome technical, cultural, and financial shifts during and immediately following certification. USDA will provide up to \$100 million for this program.



## Direct Farmer Assistance

NRCS will develop a new Organic Management conservation practice standard and offer financial and technical assistance to producers who implement the practice. Payments will be modeled on those already available to producers meeting the existing nutrient and pest management conservation practice standards. USDA will provide \$75 million for this effort. This will include an increase in organic expertise throughout its regions, creating organic experts at each of its regional technology support centers. These experts will train staff who provide direct services to USDA customers. These services include hosting hands-on organic training for state and field NRCS staff and fielding organic-related staff questions.

USDA will provide \$25 million to RMA for the new Transitional and Organic Grower Assistance Program (TOGA) which will support transitioning and certain certified organic producers' participation in crop insurance, including coverage of a portion of their insurance premium.

## Organic Pinpointed Market Development Support

Stakeholders have shared that specific organic markets have market development risks due to inadequate organic processing capacity and infrastructure, a lack of certainty about market access, and insufficient supply of certain organic ingredients. This AMS initiative will focus on key organic markets where the need for domestic supply is high, or where additional processing and distribution capacity is needed for more robust organic supply chains. Examples of markets seeking support include organic grain and feed; legumes and other edible rotational crops; and livestock and dairy. USDA will invest up to \$100 million to help improve organic supply chains in pinpointed markets. The Department will seek stakeholder input on these pinpointed initiatives beginning in September, resulting in an announcement of specific policy initiatives later this year.

## Other USDA Organic Assistance

This USDA initiative complements [existing assistance for organic producers](#), including FSA's Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP) and Organic and Transitional Education and Certification Program (OTECP). OCCSP helps producers obtain or renew their organic certification, and OTECP provides additional funding to certified and transitioning producers during the pandemic.

[NRCS offers conservation programs](#), such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), which can provide assistance to help with managing weeds and pests, and establishing high tunnels, improving soil health, and implementing other practices key to organic operations. RMA also administers federal crop insurance options available to organic producers, including [Whole Farm Revenue Protection](#) and [Micro Farm](#).

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# USDA Offers Greater Protection and Flexibility with RMA's Transitional and Organic Grower Assistance

If you have Federal crop insurance for crops in transition to organic or a certified organic grain or feed crop, you are eligible to receive premium assistance from the USDA for the 2023 reinsurance year. The Transitional and Organic Grower Assistance (TOGA) Program, offered by USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA), reduces a producer's overall crop insurance premium bills, and helps them continue to use organic agricultural systems.

RMA's TOGA — a nationwide program — is part of USDA's [Organic Transition Initiative](#), a group of programs that build more and better markets for American growers and consumers and improve the resilience of the food supply chain. Through the Organic Transition Initiative, USDA will provide support in three main areas: mentoring and advice, direct farmer assistance, and organic market security.

Premium benefits for TOGA include:

- 10 percentage points of premium subsidy for all crops in transition,
- \$5 per acre premium benefit for certified organic grain and feed crops, and
- 10 percentage points of premium subsidy for all Whole-Farm Revenue Protection (WFRP) policies covering any number of crops in transition to organic or crops with the certified organic practice. Producers who have additional individual crop insurance policies will also receive the applicable premium assistance on those policies.

Eligible organic grain and feed crops are: alfalfa seed, barley, buckwheat, canola, corn, cultivated wild rice, dry beans, dry peas, flax, forage production, forage seeding, fresh market sweet corn, grain sorghum, hybrid corn seed, hybrid popcorn seed, hybrid sorghum seed, hybrid sweet corn seed, millet, oats, crops insured under the Pasture, Rangeland, and Forage policy, peanuts, popcorn, rice, rye, safflower, sesame, silage sorghum, soybeans, sunflowers, sweet corn, triticale, and wheat.

Producers can receive both RMA's TOGA and premium assistance from other premium subsidy programs. To be eligible for RMA's TOGA, producers must purchase an additional coverage policy. If a producer purchases an underlying policy and an additional endorsement, RMA's TOGA premium subsidy only applies to the underlying policy. There is no enrollment paperwork to apply for TOGA. Producers will automatically receive the premium assistance on the billing statements for the 2023 reinsurance year, which covers applicable policies with **sales closing dates from July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023**. For most eligible crops, the 2023 reinsurance year is also the 2023 crop year.

Eligible producers who already have an insurance policy for the 2023 reinsurance year will still receive the TOGA premium subsidy. For example, for some potato, strawberry, and cabbage producers, the sales closing date for the 2023 reinsurance year has already passed. Since there is no enrollment paperwork, the premium assistance will still be automatically applied to eligible insurance policies.

You can visit the [TOGA webpage](#) for more information, including frequently asked questions, and the TOGA fact sheet.

While TOGA automatically provides premium assistance to producers who insure their crop during the 2023 reinsurance year, RMA encourages producers to contact a crop insurance agent to discuss all crop insurance opportunities. A list of crop insurance agents is available at all USDA Service Centers and online at the [RMA Agent Locator](#).

Crop insurance is sold and delivered solely through private crop insurance agents. A list of crop insurance agents is available at all USDA Service Centers and online at the [RMA Agent Locator](#). Producers can learn more about crop insurance and the modern farm safety net at [rma.usda.gov](http://rma.usda.gov).

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## Apply Now: Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative Cooperative Agreements

**Deadline: September 22**

USDA will invest up to \$12 million in partnerships that expand access to conservation technical assistance for livestock producers and increase the use of conservation practices on grazing lands. NRCS is accepting proposals through its Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative (GLCI) until September 22, 2022.

Find out more and how to apply in the recent [news release](#).

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## Disaster Assistance for 2022 Livestock Forage Losses in 38 Montana counties

### 38 MT Counties Triggered; U.S. Drought Monitor Updated Weekly

Livestock producers in **38 Montana counties** are eligible to apply for 2022 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 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.

The following 37 Montana counties have triggered the 2022 LFP drought criteria: **Beaverhead, Big Horn, Blaine, Broadwater, Carbon, Cascade, Chouteau, Daniels, Fergus, Gallatin, Garfield, Glacier, Golden Valley, Hill, Jefferson, Judith Basin, Lewis and Clark, Liberty, McCone, Madison, Meagher, Musselshell, Park, Petroleum, Phillips, Pondera, Powder River, Powell, Richland, Roosevelt, Rosebud, Sheridan, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Teton, Toole, Valley and Wheatland.** Producers must complete a CCC-853 and provide required supporting documentation no later than January 30, 2023, for 2022 losses.

Producers in these counties are also eligible to apply for benefits under the 2022 Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) for losses relating to feed transportation, livestock transportation and water transportation costs. The deadline to file a Notice of Loss for livestock losses under ELAP is 30 days after the date that the loss is apparent. Applications for payment must be completed no later than January 30, 2023, for 2022 losses.

For additional information about LFP, including eligible livestock and fire criteria, contact the local USDA Service Center and visit [www.farmers.gov](http://www.farmers.gov) or [fsa.usda.gov/mt](http://fsa.usda.gov/mt).

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## Foreign Buyers Notification

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. Foreign persons who have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA within 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the [AFIDA form](#) could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements. The data gained from these disclosures is used in the preparation of periodic reports to the President and Congress concerning the effect of such holdings upon family farms and rural communities. Click [here](#) for more information on AFIDA.

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## Inform FSA Promptly of All Changes in Farming Operation and Contact Information

It is important to promptly report any changes in your farming operation to FSA. These changes can include, but are not limited to, changes in your address, phone, or email, name changes, changes to entity membership or shares, formation or dissolution of any entity (such as a trust, partnership, LLC, LLP or corporation) that owns or operates land or owns other farming assets used in your operation, sale or purchase of land, adding or dropping leases, and any changes to financing or equipment. Participants in FSA and NRCS programs are required to timely report changes in their farming operation to their local FSA office in writing and update their CCC-902 Farm Operating Plan with necessary changes, as applicable. Failure to timely notify your local FSA office may result in ineligibility for program benefits, or delays in issuance of program payments. If you have any updates or corrections to your records, please call your local FSA office to update your records.

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## FSA's Ongoing Notice of Loss Requirements

It's important for agricultural producers to report losses immediately as all disaster programs are dependent on the timely reporting of the loss. A notice of loss can be filed with USDA Farm Service Agency via phone, email, fax or scheduled office visit.

- **ELAP – Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program:** Producers will have **15 days** from when the loss is first apparent, to file a **honeybee** notice of loss. This change provides consistency between ELAP and the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program, which also has a 15-day notice of loss period for honey. **For other covered livestock losses**, including livestock feed, grazing and farm-raised fish losses, the notice of loss deadline for ELAP will remain **30 days** from when the loss is first apparent to the producer.
- **LIP - Livestock Indemnity Program:** Submit Notice of Loss within **30** calendar days of when the loss is first apparent. Producers should document the adverse weather conditions and date(s) of weather events.
- **TAP - Tree Assistance Program:** Final Date to Submit an Application and Supporting Documentation within 90 calendar days of: the disaster event or the date when the loss is apparent to the producer.
- **NAP – Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program:** Submit Notice of Loss within **15** calendar days of the earlier of a natural disaster occurrence, the final planting date if planting is prevented by a natural disaster, the date that damage to the crop or loss of production becomes apparent; or the normal harvest date. **Note:** A producer's signature is required on form CCC-576 when a Notice of Loss is submitted.

### Change to Policy on Filing a Notice of Loss for Grazed Forage Producers with NAP Coverage:

NAP forage producers with the intended use of grazing who elect to use independent assessments or other approved alternative loss percentage methods to establish their loss are no longer required to file a CCC-576 Notice of Loss with FSA. However, a CCC-576 Application for Payment form must be submitted to FSA no later than 60 calendar days after the coverage period ends.

Producers that elect to have the grazing loss determined using similar mechanically harvested units still must timely file a CCC-576 Notice of Loss within 15 days of the disaster event or damage to the crop first becomes apparent or within 15 days of harvest.

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## Loans for Targeted Underserved Producers

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) has several loan programs to help you start or continue an agriculture production. Farm ownership and operating loans are available.

While all qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs, FSA has provided priority funding for members of targeted underserved applicants.

A targeted underserved applicant is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as members of the group without regard to his or her individual qualities.

For purposes of this program, targeted underserved groups are women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

FSA loans are only available to applicants who meet all the eligibility requirements and are unable to obtain the needed credit elsewhere.

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## Emergency Loans Available in Montana

FSA's Emergency Loan Program is available for agricultural producers in counties designated as primary or contiguous natural disaster areas. See map below of current Disaster Designations in Montana. Contact your local FSA office for specific designations in your area and time frames to apply. Eligible producers have **eight months** from the date of the disaster designation to apply for low-interest emergency loans to 1.) restore or replace essential property; 2.) pay all or part of production costs associated with the disaster year; 3.) pay essential family living expenses; or 4.) refinance certain debts, excluding real estate. Producers interested in applying for an emergency loan, or other FLP loans, should contact their local FSA office to set up an appointment with the Farm Loan Program staff serving your area.

- [Montana Disaster Designation Information](#)
- [Emergency Farm Loans](#)
- [Farm Loan Programs](#)

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### Montana

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PO Box 670  
Bozeman, MT 59771

Phone: 406.587.6872

Fax: 855.546.0264

Web: [www.fsa.usda.gov/mt](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mt)

State Executive Director:  
MAUREEN WICKS

State Committee:  
RYAN LANKFORD

**FSA Policy Reminders:** [2021 Annual Notification to FSA Customers](#)

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service  
10 East Babcock Street, Room 443  
Bozeman, MT 59715-4704  
Phone: 406-587-6811  
Fax: 855-510-7028  
Web: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/mt/home>

State Conservationist:  
TOM WATSON

USDA Risk Management Agency  
Billings Regional Office  
3490 Gabel Road, Suite 100  
Billings, MT 59102-7302  
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Web: <https://www.rma.usda.gov/>

Regional Director:  
ERIC BASHORE

**Contact information for your local office, visit:** [www.farmers.gov](http://www.farmers.gov).