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Farm Service Agency Electronic News Service

# NEWSLETTER

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## New Jersey State FSA Newsletter

New Jersey Farm Service Agency

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**Visit our website at**

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

**Deadlines** Visit our state website and click on [Program Deadlines](#) or download the latest version of our program calendar [here](#).

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

Producers ***do not*** need to show a loss to be eligible for CFAP 2

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

Since CFAP 2 enrollment began on September 21, FSA has approved more than 443,000 applications. The top five states for payments are Iowa, Nebraska, Minnesota, Illinois and Kansas. USDA has released a [data dashboard](#) on application progress and program payments and will release further updates each Monday at 2:00 p.m. ET. The report can be viewed at [farmers.gov/cfap](http://farmers.gov/cfap).

**New Jersey has approved 185 applications totaling over \$8.2 million (data as of October 25, 2020)**

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

### Eligible Commodities

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

### Getting Help from FSA

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

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

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

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

### More Information

To find the latest information on CFAP 2, visit [farmers.gov/CFAP](http://farmers.gov/CFAP) or call your local county office.

## NRCS Announces EQIP Signup for 2021 Funding

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has extended the application deadline to November 20, 2020 for New Jersey's agricultural producers to implement conservation practices on their land through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), EQIP Conservation Activity Plans and EQIP Initiatives. Applications for the following Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) – EQIP projects (Delaware River Watershed Working Lands Conservation, Whole Farm Systems Conservation Trial, Black River Greenway- Soil and Water Protection), and the Agricultural Management Assistance Program (AMA) will also now be accepted during this period.

"EQIP's fundamental purpose is to promote agricultural production, forest management and environmental quality as compatible goals. Our NJ EQIP program provides flexible assistance to eligible producers to address natural resource issues prioritized by our three regional local working groups and through several state and national initiatives," said New Jersey State Conservationist Julie Hawkins.

NRCS soil conservationists are available to help New Jersey private land managers assess the natural resources on their property and suggest conservation practices that can be planned and implemented with NRCS assistance. The Environmental Quality Incentives Program provides financial assistance for a variety of conservation issues, such as water quality degradation, soil erosion, soil quality degradation and inadequate habitat for fish and wildlife.

Initiatives in New Jersey include the Golden Winged Warbler Initiative in North Jersey and the National Water Quality Initiative in South Jersey. Last year, NRCS provided over \$5.7 million in EQIP financial assistance to New Jersey producers.

Agricultural Management Assistance is a voluntary conservation program available to beginning and limited resource farmers, small farms, and producers who have had limited participation in other USDA financial assistance programs. Producers eligible for AMA can apply for financial and technical assistance to voluntarily address resource issues such as water management, water quality, and erosion control by incorporating conservation into their farming operations.

NRCS provides financial and technical assistance to help agricultural producers address resource concerns through conservation programs authorized by the Farm Bill. NRCS accepts applications for conservation programs year-round and are processed when funding becomes available. Interested producers should visit their [local NRCS service center](#) and the [NJ NRCS website](#) for more information.

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## Enrollment Begins for Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage Programs for 2021

Agricultural producers can now make elections and enroll in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for the 2021 crop year. The signup period opened Tuesday, Oct. 13. These key U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) safety-net programs help producers weather fluctuations in either revenue or price for certain crops, and more than \$5 billion in payments are in the process of going out to producers who signed up for the 2019 crop year.

Enrollment for the 2021 crop year closes March 15, 2021.

ARC provides income support payments on historical base acres when actual crop revenue declines below a specified guaranteed level. PLC provides income support payments on historical base acres when the effective price for a covered commodity falls below its reference price.

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

### 2021 Elections and Enrollment

Producers can elect coverage and enroll in crop-by-crop ARC-County or PLC, or ARC-Individual for the entire farm, for the 2021 crop year. Although election changes for 2021 are optional, enrollment (signed contract) is required for each year of the program. If a producer has a multi-year contract on the farm and makes an election change for 2021, it will be necessary to sign a new contract.

If an election is not submitted by the deadline of March 15, 2021, the election defaults to the current election for crops on the farm from the prior crop year.

For crop years 2022 and 2023, producers will have an opportunity to make new elections during those signups. Farm owners cannot enroll in either program unless they have a share interest in the farm.

### Web-Based Decision Tools

In partnership with USDA, the University of Illinois and Texas A&M University offer web-based decision tools to assist producers in making informed, educated decisions using crop data specific to their respective farming operations. Tools include:

- [Gardner-farmdoc Payment Calculator](#), the University of Illinois tool that offers farmers the ability to run payment estimate modeling for their farms and counties for ARC-County and PLC.
- [ARC and PLC Decision Tool](#), the Texas A&M tool allows producers to analyze payment yield updates and expected payments for 2021. Producers who have used the tool in the past should see their username and much of their farm data already available in the system.

### 2019 Crop Year ARC and PLC Payments

FSA began processing payments last week for 2019 ARC-County (ARC-CO) and PLC on covered commodities that met payment triggers on farms enrolled for the 2019 crop year. In addition to the \$5 billion now in process, FSA anticipates it will issue additional payments by the end of November for 2019 commodities covered under ARC-Individual (ARC-IC) and additional commodities that trigger PLC and ARC-CO payments for which rates have not yet been published

Producers who had 2019 covered commodities enrolled in ARC-CO can visit the [ARC and PLC webpage](#) for payment rates applicable to their county and each covered commodity. For farms and covered commodities enrolled in 2019 PLC, the following crops met payment triggers: barley, canola, chickpeas (small and large), corn, dry peas, grain sorghum, lentils, peanuts, seed cotton and wheat.

Oats and soybeans did not meet 2019 PLC payment triggers.

2019 PLC payment rates for the following covered commodities have not been determined: crambe, flaxseed, long and medium grain rice, mustard seed, rapeseed, safflower, sesame seed, sunflower seed and temperate Japonica rice. Payment rates for these commodities will be announced at a later date.

### More Information

For more information on ARC and PLC, including two online decision tools that assist producers in making enrollment and election decisions specific to their operations, visit the [ARC and PLC webpage](#).

For additional questions and assistance, contact your local USDA service center. To locate your local FSA office, visit [farmers.gov/service-locator](#).

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## Farm Storage Facility Loan Rates as Low as 0.125%

FSA's Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program provides low-interest financing to producers to build or upgrade storage facilities and to purchase portable (new or used) structures, equipment and storage and handling trucks.

*Rates for loans approved in November 2020*

- 3 year loan – 0.125%
- 5 year loan – 0.250%
- 7 year loan – 0.500%
- 10 year loan – 0.750%
- 12 year loan – 0.875%

The low-interest funds can be used to build or upgrade permanent facilities to store commodities. Eligible commodities include corn, grain sorghum, rice, soybeans, oats, peanuts, wheat, barley, minor oilseeds harvested as whole grain, pulse crops (lentils, chickpeas and dry peas), hay, honey, renewable biomass, fruits, nuts and vegetables for cold storage facilities, floriculture, hops, maple sap, rye, milk, cheese, butter, yogurt, meat and poultry (unprocessed), eggs, and aquaculture (excluding systems that maintain live animals through uptake and discharge of water). Qualified facilities include grain bins, hay barns and cold storage facilities for eligible commodities.

**Wool has recently been added as an eligible commodity under FSFL**

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

Producers 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.

To learn more about the FSA Farm Storage Facility Loan, visit [fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport](#) or contact your local FSA county office. To locate your local FSA office visit [farmers.gov/service-center-locator](#).

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## USDA Announces Increased Subsidies and Other Improvements to the Livestock Risk Protection Insurance Program

The USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) announced it is increasing premium subsidies and will make other improvements to the Livestock Risk Protection (LRP) plan of insurance for feeder cattle, fed cattle and swine starting with the 2021 crop year. The increased premium subsidy is retroactive to

the beginning of the 2021 crop year and is based on the coverage selected by you. RMA will implement the other improvements later this year.

Other improvements to be implemented include:

- Increasing livestock head limits for feeder and fed cattle to 6,000 head per endorsement/12,000 head annually, and swine to 40,000 head per endorsement/150,000 head annually
- Modifying the requirement to own insured livestock until the last 60 days of the endorsement
- Increasing the endorsement lengths for swine up to 52 weeks
- Creating new feeder cattle and swine types to allow for unborn livestock to be insured

For more information on the LRP program, please see the [RMA website](#). RMA is authorizing additional flexibilities due to coronavirus. More information can be found at [farmers.gov/coronavirus](https://farmers.gov/coronavirus).

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## USDA Reminds New Jersey Farmers of the November 15 Acreage Reporting Deadline

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices in New Jersey are currently open to phone and virtual appointments only but can still work with producers on timely filing crop acreage reports. FSA staff can provide assistance over the phone, by email and through virtual meetings via Microsoft Teams.

The following upcoming acreage reporting dates are applicable in New Jersey:

- **Nov 15** - Fall Planted Small Grains
- **Jan 2** - Honey

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers must file an accurate crop acreage report by the applicable deadline. FSA staff are able to assist producers in completing acreage reports, including providing maps.

FSA county offices in New Jersey will be happy to provide maps to producers through mail, email or local pick-up with instructions for completing the maps. After planting is complete, producers should return completed maps and the acreage reporting sheet as directed by their local office.

FSA offices are using Microsoft Teams software to virtually meet with producers to review maps and documents for certification. Producers who want to schedule a virtual appointment can download the Microsoft Teams app on their smart phones and call the FSA office for an appointment. You can also use Microsoft Teams from your personal computer without downloading software.

After completed maps and all acreage reporting information is received, FSA will make software updates and provide producers the completed *Report of Acreage* form (FSA-578) to sign. Producers must return the signed form certifying their acreage report to the FSA office by the reporting deadline above.

### The following exceptions apply to acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.
- If a producer acquires additional acreage after the acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office.

Producers should also report crop acreage they intended to plant, but due to natural disaster, were unable to plant. Prevented planting acreage must be reported on form CCC-576, Notice of Loss, no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date as established by FSA and USDA's Risk Management Agency.

**Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policy holders should note that the acreage reporting date for NAP-covered crops is the earlier of the dates listed above or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins.**

For questions, please contact your local FSA office. To locate your local FSA office visit [farmers.gov/service-center-locator](https://farmers.gov/service-center-locator).

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## Farmers.gov Feature Helps Producers Find Farm Loans that Fit Their Operation

Farmers and ranchers can use the *Farm Loan Discovery Tool* on [farmers.gov](https://farmers.gov) to find information on USDA farm loans that may best fit their operations.

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers a variety of loan options to help farmers finance their operations. From buying land to financing the purchase of equipment, FSA loans can help.

USDA conducted field research in eight states, gathering input from farmers and FSA farm loan staff to better understand their needs and challenges.

### How the Tool Works

Farmers who are looking for financing options to operate a farm or buy land can answer a few simple questions about what they are looking to fund and how much money they need to borrow. After submitting their answers, farmers will receive information on farm loans that best fit their specific needs. The loan application and additional resources also will be provided.

Farmers can download application quick guides that outline what to expect from preparing an application to receiving a loan decision. There are four guides that cover loans to individuals, entities, and youth, as well as information on microloans. The guides include general eligibility requirements and a list of required forms and documentation for each type of loan. These guides can help farmers prepare before their first USDA service center visit with a loan officer.

Farmers can access the *Farm Loan Discovery Tool* by visiting [farmers.gov/fund](https://farmers.gov/fund) and clicking the "Start" button. Follow the prompts and answer five simple questions to receive loan information that is applicable to your agricultural operation. The tool is built to run on any modern browser like Chrome, Edge, Firefox, or the Safari browser, and is fully functional on mobile devices. It does not work in Internet Explorer.

### About Farmers.gov

In 2018, USDA unveiled [farmers.gov](https://farmers.gov), a dynamic, mobile-friendly public website combined with an authenticated portal where farmers will be able to apply for programs, process transactions, and manage accounts.

The *Farm Loan Discovery Tool* is one of many resources on [farmers.gov](https://farmers.gov) to help connect farmers to information that can help their operations. Earlier this year, USDA launched the *My Financial Information* feature, which enables farmers to view their loan information, history, payments, and alerts by logging into the website.

USDA is building [farmers.gov](https://farmers.gov) for farmers, by farmers. In addition to the interactive farm loan features, the site also offers a Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool. Farmers can visit [farmers.gov/recover/disaster-assistance-tool#step-1](https://farmers.gov/recover/disaster-assistance-tool#step-1) to find disaster assistance programs that can help their operation recover from natural disasters.

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

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