

November 2020



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

# NEWSLETTER

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## Rhode Island FSA Newsletter

### Rhode Island Farm Service Agency

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**RI State Office Suite 62**

**Phone:** 401-828-3120 Option 1.

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

**State Executive Director:** W. Michael Sullivan

**State Committee:** Doreen Pezza, Kevin Breene, Judith Carvalho, David Frerichs, Ellen Puccetti

The State Committee meets the second Wednesday of every month subject to change.

**RI County Office Suite 49**

### Message from the State Executive Director

The entire State has had at least one frost and much saw a bit of snow recently, but we've got 70 plus weather forecast for the end of the week. The strange and challenging season continues as does your work on the responsibilities here at FSA.

The **Coronavirus Food Assistance Program** (CFAP2) continues to generate interest and is proving to be valuable to most Rhode Island producers. The FSA has received and approved a significant number of applications with payments to producers now exceeding \$500,000. There is still time to apply and I certainly urge you to do so. This program is NOT a loan but is a direct deposit to your bank account in an effort to assist in maintaining farm production here in Rhode Island.

**Farm Credit East** has partnered with FSA to provide an online webinar this coming **Friday November 6 at 11 am**. This session is **free** and open to all producers. More information is available at the link:

<https://www.morningagclips.com/farm-credit-east-usda-present-webinar-on-cfap-2/>

Please go to the website, <https://www.usda.gov/>, and review the options. The **DEADLINE** for applications is **December 11, 2020**. I

**Phone:** 401-828-3120 Option 2.

**RI County Executive**

**Director:** Sheryl Michener

**County Committee:** Gilbert Rathbun Jr., Joseph Polseno, George Goulart Jr., John Sousa, Kim Coulter

The County Committee meets the first Wednesday of every month subject to change.

**RI Farm Loan Team Suite 49**

401-828-3120 Option 3.

**Program Deadlines**

November 2nd, County Committee Election Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters located in Washington County RI.

November 20th, Deadline to insure your Perennial Crops, Grass, Mixed Forage, Alfalfa, Perennial Forage under NAP.

November 20th, Deadline to insure your Apples, Cranberries, Grapes and Peaches with RMA.

December 11th, Deadline to submit applications under the CFAP 2 Program.

December 11th, Deadline to enroll in the Dairy Margin Coverage Program (DMC).

December 14th, Deadline to submit applications under the Seafood Trade Relief Program (STRP)

December 31st, Deadline to insure your Specialty Type

don't know why any producer should pass up the funding so please apply or if you've questions or concerns give us a call.

USDA Secretary Purdue recognized and declared all five counties in Rhode Island as drought impacted. This declaration triggers several programs and opportunities. FSA, NRCS and RI DEM Ag Division have a 'task force' which will response to any producer and do a site visit to try and address any permits or challenges on the farm because of the drought. Clearing out farm ponds can be done now, and other associated improvements can be possible. FSA has the **Emergency Livestock Assistance Program** that can assist with animal water supply challenges and even address honeybee losses. Please help us to assist you and call in if you have a need and we'll do our best to assist.

I'm writing this on Election Day. I have gone and voted, and hope all participate in our wonderful democracy. It's been a difficult and challenging year. The staff here at USDA Farm Services Agency is going to be here to assist however we can in these challenging times. Agriculture in Rhode Island is a small community and we can and should pull together to survive and thrive even in difficult times.

Stay well friends,

*W. Michael Sullivan, RI State Executive Director*

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

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](https://farmers.gov/cfap).

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.

Crops; Honey, Maple sap under NAP.

### **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](https://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](https://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](https://farmers.gov/CFAP) or call 877-508-8364.

## **The Importance of Responding to NASS Surveys**

USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) conducts hundreds of surveys every year and prepares reports covering virtually every aspect of U.S. agriculture.

If you receive a survey questionnaire, please respond quickly and online if possible.

The results of the surveys help determine the structure of USDA farm programs, such as soil rental rates for the Conservation Reserve Program and prices and yields used for the Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage programs. This county-level data is critical for USDA farm

payment determinations. Survey responses also help associations, businesses and policymakers advocate for their industry and help educate others on the importance of agriculture.

NASS safeguards the privacy of all respondents and publishes only aggregate data, ensuring that no individual operation or producer can be identified.

NASS data is available online at [nass.usda.gov/Publications](https://nass.usda.gov/Publications) and through the searchable [Quick Stats database](#). Watch a video on how NASS data is used at [youtube.com/watch?v=m-4zjnh26io&feature=youtu.be](https://youtube.com/watch?v=m-4zjnh26io&feature=youtu.be).

## USDA Supports U.S. Seafood Industry Impacted by Retaliatory Tariffs

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will provide approximately \$530 million to support the U.S. seafood industry and commercially licensed fishermen impacted by retaliatory tariffs from foreign governments. The funding will be provided through the Seafood Trade Relief Program and funded through the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC), administered by USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA).

The Seafood Trade Relief Program funding will support the following seafood types:

- Atka mackerel
- Crab (Dungeness, King, Snow, Southern Tanner)
- Flounder
- Geoduck
- Goosefish
- Herrings
- Lobster
- Pacific Cod
- Pacific Ocean Perch
- Pollock
- Sablefish
- Salmon
- Sole
- Squid
- Tuna
- Turbot

Fishermen can sign-up for relief through the program from September 14, 2020 to December 14, 2020. Fishermen should apply through their local USDA Service Center. To find your local Service Center, visit [www.farmers.gov/service-center-locator](https://www.farmers.gov/service-center-locator). The application can be found at [www.farmers.gov/seafood](https://www.farmers.gov/seafood).

## Dairy Margin Coverage Program Enrollment for 2021 Opens Oct. 13

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will begin accepting applications for the [Dairy Margin Coverage](#) (DMC) program on Tuesday, October 13, 2020 for 2021 enrollment.

Signup runs through Dec. 11, 2020. DMC is a voluntary risk management program 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. DMC payments triggered for seven months in 2019 and three months so far in 2020. More than 23,000 operations enrolled in DMC in 2019, and more than 13,000 in 2020.

To determine the appropriate level of coverage for a specific dairy operation, producers can utilize the recently updated online dairy decision tool. The [decision tool](#) is designed to assist producers with calculating total premium costs and administrative fees associated with participation in DMC. An [informational video](#) is available, too.

Improvements to the decision tool, made in cooperation with representatives from the University of Minnesota and University of Wisconsin, include historical analysis that illustrates what DMC indemnity payments might have been had the program been available over the previous two decades. The analysis indicates that over the course of time, DMC payments made to producers exceed premiums paid. These decision tool enhancements provide a more comprehensive decision support experience for producers considering DMC.

In addition to DMC, USDA offers a variety of programs that have helped dairy producers, including insurance, disaster assistance, and conservation programs. Most recently, the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 1 provided \$1.75 billion in direct relief to dairy producers who faced price declines and additional marketing costs due to COVID-19 in early 2020. Now, signup is underway for the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2, which provides another round of assistance for dairy producers and many other eligible producers.


For more information, visit [farmers.gov DMC webpage](#), or contact your local USDA Service Center. To locate your local FSA office, visit [farmers.gov/service-center-locator](#).

All USDA Service Centers are open for business, including some that are open to visitors to conduct business in person by appointment only. All Service Center visitors wishing to conduct business with the FSA, Natural Resources Conservation Service, or any other Service Center agency should call ahead and schedule an appointment. Service Centers that are open for appointments will pre-screen visitors based on health concerns or recent travel, and visitors must adhere to social distancing guidelines. Visitors are required to wear a face covering during their appointment. Field work will continue with appropriate social distancing. Our program delivery staff will be in the office, and they will be working with our producers in office, by phone, and using online tools. More information can be found at [farmers.gov/coronavirus](#).

## Rhode Island is Eligible for Emergency Loans

Bristol, Kent, Providence, Newport and Washington Counties has been declared as primary disaster areas due to drought that began on September 15, 2020. Under this designation, if you have operations in any primary or contiguous county, you are eligible to apply for low interest emergency loans.

Emergency loans help you recover from production and physical losses due to drought, flooding and other natural disasters or quarantine.

You have eight  months from the date of the declaration to apply for emergency loan assistance. FSA will consider each loan application on its own merits, taking into account the extent of losses, security available and repayment ability. You can borrow up to 100 percent of actual production or physical losses, to a maximum amount of \$500,000.

For more information about emergency loans, contact the Rhode Island Farm Loan team at 401-828-3120 Option 3.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).