

- [Dates to Remember](#)
- [Agricultural Producers Have Until March 15 to Enroll in USDA's Key Commodity Safety Net Programs](#)
- [USDA Extends Deadline for Spot Market Hog Pandemic Program](#)
- [Current FSA Loan Interest Rates](#)
- [Linkage Requirements for Payments Received Under WHIP+ and/or QLA](#)
- [Wisconsin NRCS Accepting Proposals for 2022 Conservation Innovation Grants](#)
- [Waiver of DCIA Compliance for Commodity and Farm Storage Facility Loan Programs](#)
- [USDA Announces Conservation Reserve Program Signups for 2022](#)
- [USDA to Invest \\$1 Billion in Climate Smart Commodities, Expanding Markets, Strengthening Rural America](#)

Dates to Remember

March 11, 2022: [General CRP](#) Sign Up Deadline

March 15, 2022: [ARC/PLC](#) Program Sign Up Deadline

March 15, 2022: [NAP](#) Deadline for all Spring Seeded Annual Crops

March 15, 2022: Enrollment Deadline for [Pandemic Cover Crop Program](#)

March 25, 2022: Enrollment Deadline for [Dairy Margin Coverage](#) Program

April 2, 2022: Wisconsin DATCP [Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin Grant](#) Application Deadline

April 11, 2022: [Conservation Innovation Grant](#) Applications Due

April 15, 2022: [Spot Market Hog Pandemic Program \(SMHPP\)](#) Deadline to apply

Agricultural Producers Have Until March 15 to Enroll in USDA's Key Commodity Safety Net Programs

Agricultural producers who have not yet enrolled in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for the 2022 crop year have until March 15, 2022, to sign a contract. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) offers these two safety net programs to provide vital income support to farmers experiencing substantial declines in crop prices or revenues.

Producers can elect coverage and enroll in ARC-County or PLC, which are both crop-by-crop, or ARC-Individual, which is for the entire farm. Although election changes for 2022 are optional, producers must enroll through a signed contract each year. Also, if a producer has a multi-year contract on the farm and makes an election change for 2022, it will be necessary to sign a new contract.

If an election is not submitted by the March 15, 2022, deadline, the election remains the same as the 2021 election for crops on the farm. Farm owners cannot enroll in either program unless they have a share interest in the crop.

Producers have completed 976,249 contracts to date, representing 54% of the more than 1.8 million expected contracts.

Producers who do not complete enrollment by the deadline will not be enrolled in ARC or PLC for the 2022 crop year and will not receive a payment if triggered.

Producers are eligible to enroll farms with base acres for the following commodities: 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.

Decision Tools

In partnership with USDA, two web-based decision tools are available to assist producers in making informed, educated decisions using crop data specific to their respective farming operations:

- [Gardner-farmdoc Payment Calculator](#), a tool available through the University of Illinois allows producers to estimate payments for farms and counties for ARC-CO and PLC.
- [ARC and PLC Decision Tool](#), a tool available through Texas A&M that allows producers to estimate payments and yield updates and expected payments for 2022.

Crop Insurance Considerations and Decision Deadline

ARC and PLC are part of a broader safety net provided by USDA, which also includes crop insurance and marketing assistance loans.

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

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

Unlike SCO, the Enhanced Coverage Option (ECO) is unaffected by an ARC election. Producers may add ECO regardless of the farm program election.

Upland cotton farmers who choose to enroll seed cotton base acres in ARC or PLC are ineligible for the stacked income protection plan (STAX) on their planted cotton acres for that farm.

Producers should contact their crop insurance agent to make certain that the election and enrollment made at FSA follows their intention to participate in STAX or SCO coverage. Producers have until March 15, 2022, to make the appropriate changes or cancel their ARC or PLC contract.

More Information

In addition to the March 15 deadline for ARC and PLC, other important deadlines include:

- March 1, [Livestock Indemnity Program](#)
- March 11, [Conservation Reserve Program General Signup](#)
- March 15, [Pandemic Cover Crop Program](#)
- March 25, [Dairy Margin Coverage](#)

For more information on ARC and PLC, producers can visit the [ARC and PLC webpage](#) or contact their local USDA Service Center. In those service centers where COVID cases exceed safety levels, staff continue to work with agricultural producers via phone, email and other digital tools. Producers with [level 2 eauthentication access](#) can electronically sign contracts or may make arrangements to drop off signed contracts at the FSA county office. Because of the pandemic, some [USDA Service Centers](#) are open to limited visitors.

USDA Extends Deadline for Spot Market Hog Pandemic Program

Hog producers who sold hogs through a spot market sale during the COVID-19 pandemic now have until April 15, 2022, to submit their applications for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Spot Market Hog Pandemic Program (SMHPP). SMHPP, which is part of USDA's [Pandemic Assistance for Producers](#) initiative, originally had a deadline to submit applications by Feb. 25, 2022.

SMHPP assists hog producers who sold hogs through a spot market sale from April 16, 2020, through Sept. 1, 2020, the period during which these producers faced the greatest reduction in market prices due to the pandemic. USDA is offering SMHPP in response to a reduction in packer production and supply chain issues due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in fewer negotiated hogs being procured and subsequent lower market prices. USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) began accepting applications for SMHPP on Dec. 15, 2021.

In response to stakeholder feedback and our analysis of the program to date, USDA will be making adjustments to clarify the definition of a spot market sale and to hog eligibility, while including documentation requirements to prevent erroneous payments. USDA will also be announcing those updates soon and wants to assure hog producers that there will be ample time to submit their applications for assistance.

Applying for Assistance

Eligible hog producers can apply for SMHPP by completing the FSA-940, Spot Market Hog Pandemic Program application. Visit farmers.gov/smhpp to learn more.

Applications can be submitted to the FSA office at any USDA Service Center nationwide by mail, fax, hand delivery or via electronic means. To find their local FSA office, producers can visit farmers.gov/service-locator. Hog producers can also call 877-508-8364 to speak directly with a USDA employee ready to offer assistance. Service Center staff continue to work with agricultural producers via phone, email, and other digital tools. Because of the pandemic, some [USDA Service Centers](#) are open to limited visitors. Contact your Service Center to set up an in-person or phone appointment. Additionally, more information related to USDA's response and relief for producers can be found at farmers.gov/coronavirus.

Current FSA Loan Interest Rates

Current loan rates as of February 1, 2022.

Farm Loan Interest Rates:

Farm Operating - Direct	2.375%
Farm Operating - Microloan	2.375%
Farm Ownership - Direct	3.000%
Farm Ownership - Microloan	3.000%
Farm Ownership - Direct, Joint Financing	2.500%
Farm Ownership - Down Payment	1.500%
Emergency - Amount of Actual Loss	3.375%

Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL):

3-year FSFL	1.500%
5-year FSFL	1.750%
7-year FSFL	1.875%
10-year FSFL	1.875%
12-year FSFL	2.000%

Please visit the [Farm Loan Program](#) webpage for more information.

Linkage Requirements for Payments Received Under WHIP+ and/or QLA

If you received a payment under the Wildfires and Hurricanes Indemnity Program+ (WHIP+) or the Quality Loss Adjustment Program (QLA) for crop production and/or quality losses occurring in 2018, 2019, or 2020 crop years, you are required to meet linkage requirements by obtaining federal crop insurance or Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage at the 60/100 level, or higher, for both the 2022 and 2023 crop years.

When applying for WHIP+ or QLA, form FSA-895 (Crop Insurance and/or NAP Coverage Agreement) was submitted acknowledging the requirement to obtain federal crop insurance, if available, or NAP coverage if federal crop insurance is not available. The coverage requirement is applicable to the physical location county of the crop that received WHIP+ and/or QLA benefits.

Producers should not delay contacting their federal crop insurance agent or local county FSA Office to inquire about coverage options, as **failure to obtain the applicable coverage by the sales/application closing date will result in the required refund of WHIP+ and QLA benefits received on the applicable crop, plus interest.** You can determine if crops are eligible for federal crop insurance or NAP by [visiting the RMA website](#).

Wisconsin NRCS Accepting Proposals for 2022 Conservation Innovation Grants

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Wisconsin announced today, the availability of \$500,000 in Wisconsin Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) funding to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies. All non-federal entities and individuals are invited to apply, with the sole exception of federal agencies. Project proposal applications are due April 11, 2022.

Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) is a competitive program that supports the development of new tools, approaches, practices, and technologies to further natural resource conservation on private lands. “Through creative problem solving and innovation, CIG partners work to address our nation's water quality, air quality, soil health and wildlife habitat challenges, all while improving agricultural operations,” said Acting Wisconsin State Conservationist Eric Allness.

CIG project proposals must involve Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) eligible producers and should demonstrate the use of innovative technologies or approaches to address a natural resource concern. These resource concerns must fit into one of the following categories: Conservation Planning, Manure Management Systems or Climate Smart Management Systems.

Projects may be between one and three years in duration. The maximum award amount for a single award in 2022 is \$500,000 and the minimum award amount is \$50,000. Applicants must match the USDA funds awarded on a dollar-for-dollar basis from non-Federal sources with cash and in-kind contributions.

Wisconsin CIG grant application materials are available on Grants.gov at:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=337928>

Complete application packets must be received by 10:59 p.m., Central Time on April 11, 2022, through www.grants.gov. For technical issues with Grants.gov, contact Grants.gov Applicant Support at 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov. Applicants may direct their questions regarding the process to NRCS Resource Conservationist Ryan Gerlich at 608-662-4422, ext 227, or by e-mail ryan.gerlich@usda.gov.

The funding available through this NFO is Federal financial assistance. Grants 101 Training is highly recommended for those seeking knowledge about Federal financial assistance. The training is free and available to the public via <https://www.cfo.gov/grants-training/>.

Waiver of DCIA Compliance for Commodity and Farm Storage Facility Loan Programs

On January 27, 2021, the Biden-Harris Administration suspended all debt collections, foreclosures, and other adverse actions for borrowers of direct farm loans and Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL) through USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) because of the national public health emergency caused by the Coronavirus pandemic.

It has been determined that the January 2021 suspension included a waiver of the Debt Collection Improvement Act (DCIA) noncompliance for issuing new Marketing Assistance

Loans (MAL), Loan Deficiency Payments (LDP) or FSFL to borrowers who are in delinquent status with FSFL or farm loans.

Under normal circumstances, DCIA specifies that a person cannot obtain Federal financial assistance in the form of loans (other than disaster loans), loan insurance, or guarantees if that person has delinquent Federal non-tax debt. MAL, LDP, and FSFL programs administered by FSA are currently subject to these statutory constraints.

FSA county offices will review MALs, LDPs, and FSFLs that were previously denied on or after January 27, 2021, because of DCIA noncompliance. Offices will notify applicants of the waiver provisions and the opportunity to obtain a loan. All applicable eligibility requirements remain in place with the exception of DCIA waiver.

Reach out to your local FSA office for more information. To find your local office, visit farmers.gov/service-locator.

USDA Announces Conservation Reserve Program Signups for 2022

Agricultural producers and landowners can sign up soon for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), a cornerstone conservation program offered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and a key tool in the Biden-Harris Administration effort to address climate change and achieve other natural resource benefits. The General CRP signup will run from **Jan. 31 to March 11**, and the Grassland CRP signup will run from **April 4 to May 13**.

Producers and landowners enrolled 4.6 million acres into CRP signups in 2021, including 2.5 million acres in the largest Grassland CRP signup in history. There are currently 22.1 million acres enrolled, and FSA is aiming to reach the 25.5-million-acre cap statutorily set for fiscal year 2022.

CRP Signups

General CRP helps producers and landowners establish long-term, resource-conserving plant species, such as approved grasses or trees, to control soil erosion, improve water quality and enhance wildlife habitat on cropland.

Meanwhile, Grassland CRP is a working lands program, helping landowners and operators protect grassland, including rangeland and pastureland and certain other lands, while maintaining the areas as working grazing lands. Protecting grasslands contributes positively to the economy of many regions, provides biodiversity of plant and animal populations and provides important carbon sequestration benefits to deliver lasting climate outcomes.

Alongside these programs, producers and landowners can enroll acres in Continuous CRP under the ongoing sign up, which includes projects available through

the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE).

Climate Benefits

Last year, FSA enacted a Climate-Smart Practice Incentive for CRP General and Continuous signups, to better target CRP on addressing climate change. This incentive aims to increase carbon sequestration and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. CRP's climate-smart practices include establishment of trees and permanent grasses, development of wildlife habitat and wetland restoration. The Climate-Smart Practice Incentive is annual, and the amount is based on the benefits of each practice type.

Additionally, in order to better target the program toward climate outcomes, USDA invested \$10 million last year in the CRP Monitoring, Assessment and Evaluation (MAE) program to measure and monitor the soil carbon and climate resilience impacts of conservation practices over the life of new CRP contracts. This will enable the agency to further refine the program and practices to provide producers tools for increased climate resilience.

USDA to Invest \$1 Billion in Climate Smart Commodities, Expanding Markets, Strengthening Rural America

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced on February 7 that the U.S. Department of Agriculture is delivering on its promise to expand markets by investing \$1 billion in partnerships to support America's climate-smart farmers, ranchers and forest landowners. The new [Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities](#) opportunity will finance pilot projects that create market opportunities for U.S. agricultural and forestry products that use climate-smart practices and include innovative, cost-effective ways to measure and verify greenhouse gas benefits. USDA is now accepting project applications for fiscal year 2022.

For the purposes of this funding opportunity, a climate-smart commodity is defined as an agricultural commodity that is produced using agricultural (farming, ranching or forestry) practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions or sequester carbon.

Funding will be provided to partners through the USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation for pilot projects to provide incentives to producers and landowners to:

- implement climate-smart production practices, activities, and systems on working lands,
- measure/quantify, monitor and verify the carbon and greenhouse gas (GHG) benefits associated with those practices, and
- develop markets and promote the resulting climate-smart commodities.

Funding will be provided in two funding pools, and applicants must submit their applications via Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on:

- April 8, 2022, for the first funding pool (proposals from \$5 million to \$100 million), and
- May 27, 2022, for the second funding pool (proposals from \$250,000 to \$4,999,999).

A wide range of organizations may apply, but the primary applicant must be an entity, not an individual.

USDA is committed to equity in program delivery and is specifically seeking proposals from entities serving all types of producers, including small or historically underserved producers.

Visit [usda.gov](https://www.usda.gov) for additional information including Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities and resources to support your application.

Wisconsin Farm Service Agency

8030 Excelsior Drive
Suite 100
Madison, WI 53717

Phone: 608-662-4422

State Executive Director

Gene Schriefer
eugene.schriefer@usda.gov

Farm Program Chief

Greg Biba
greg.biba@usda.gov

Farm Loan Chief

Tom Brandt
tom.brandt@usda.gov

Farm Program Chief

John Palmer
john.palmer@usda.gov

Acting State Committee:

Josh Tranel

