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Highlights from the CED

Greetings Carbon and Albany County producers! Summer is upon us along with annual acreage reporting season.



Acreage Reporting- Please call or swing by the office to report your acres after they are planted. **The deadline to complete acreage reports for spring crops, perennial grasses, and CRP is July 17, 2023. Failure to meet the July 17th deadline will result in late filed fees being charged.**

ERP Phase 2 & PARP- The signup for these programs has been extended. Please contact the office to make an appointment to complete these applications or for more information. You will need to gather your Schedule F for 2018-2020 to complete these forms. The signup process takes about 15-30 minutes to complete. **The signup deadline for these programs is now July 14, 2023.**

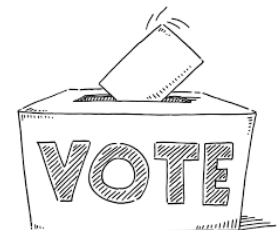
Dates To Remember

July 17 – Acreage reporting deadline for all crops planted prior to July 15, 2023. This includes alfalfa, CRP, spring barley, and oats. **Remember alfalfa and CRP require yearly certifications.**

Aug 1- Deadline to nominate a producer for COC Election (LAA 5- Little Snake River Conservation District area).

Farm Service Agency Now Accepting Nominations for Farmers and Ranchers to Serve on Local County

USDA is now accepting nominations for county committee members for elections that will occur later this year. Additionally, USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is unveiling a new GIS tool to make it easier for producers to participate in the nomination and election processes for county committee members, who make important decisions on how federal farm programs are administered locally. All nomination forms for the 2023 election must be postmarked or received in the local FSA office by Aug. 1, 2023.



Elections will occur in certain Local Administrative Areas (LAA) for members. LAAs are elective areas for FSA committees in a single county or multi-county jurisdiction and they may include LAAs that are focused

on an urban or suburban area. Customers can locate their LAA through a new GIS locator tool available at fsa.usda.gov/elections.

Agricultural producers may be nominated for candidacy for the county committee if they:

- Participate or cooperate in a USDA program; and
- Reside in the LAA that is up for election this year.

A cooperating producer is someone who has provided information about their farming or ranching operation to FSA, even if they have not applied or received program benefits. Individuals may nominate themselves or others and qualifying organizations may also nominate candidates. USDA encourages minority producers, women and beginning farmers or ranchers to nominate, vote and hold office.

This year's election area is LAA 5, the Little Snake River Conservation District area.

Nationwide, more than 7,700 dedicated members of the agricultural community serve on FSA county committees. The committees are made up of three to 11 members who serve three-year terms. Committee members are vital to how FSA carries out disaster programs, as well as conservation, commodity and price support programs, county office employment and other agricultural issues.

More Information

Producers should contact their local FSA office today to register and find out how to get involved in their county's election, including if their LAA is up for election this year. To be considered, a producer must be registered and sign an [FSA-669A](#) nomination form. Urban farmers should use an

Nomination forms and other information about FSA county committee elections are available at fsa.usda.gov/elections. Election ballots will be mailed to eligible voters beginning Nov. 6, 2023.

USDA Reminds Producers to File Crop Acreage Reports

Agricultural producers who have not yet completed their [crop acreage reports](#) after spring planting should make an appointment with the Carbon/Albany County Farm Service Agency (FSA) before the applicable deadline.

An acreage report documents a crop grown on a farm or ranch and its intended uses. Filing an accurate and timely acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planted acreage, can prevent the loss of benefits.



How to File a Report

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable for Name County:

July 17, 2023 all spring planted crops, perennial grasses, alfalfa, and CRP

To file a crop acreage report, producers need to provide:

- Crop and crop type or variety.
- Intended use of the crop.
- Number of acres of the crop.
- Map with approximate boundaries for the crop.
- Planting date(s).
- Planting pattern, when applicable.
- Producer shares.
- Irrigation practice(s).

- Acreage prevented from planting, when applicable.
- Other information as required.

Acreage Reporting Details

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.
- If crops are covered by the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program, acreage reports should be submitted by the applicable state, county, or crop-specific reporting deadline or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins.

Producers should also report crop acreage they intended to plant, but due to natural disaster, were unable to because of a natural disaster.

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.

FSA offers continuous certification for perennial forage. This means after perennial forage (grass for hay or grazing only) is reported once and the producer elects continuous certification, the certification remains in effect until a change is made. Check with FSA at the local USDA Service Center for more information on continuous certification.

Myth-Busting FSA's New Revenue-Based Disaster and Pandemic Assistance Programs

A Message from FSA Administrator Zach Ducheneaux

In January, we announced two new programs designed to assist producers who experienced revenue losses from 2020 and 2021 natural disasters or the COVID-19 pandemic. These programs are revenue-based and feel a little different from our regular programs, but the goal is to better support farmers.

Both the [Emergency Relief Program \(ERP\) Phase Two](#) and the [Pandemic Assistance Revenue Program \(PARP\)](#) offer a holistic approach to disaster assistance and provide economic support for producers who bear the financial brunt of circumstances beyond their control.

With the rollout of any new program, there is a learning curve for producers and employees alike. ERP Phase Two and PARP are no exception. To encourage producer participation in these valuable programs, I'm going to do my best to debunk some myths and misconceptions surrounding ERP Phase Two and PARP.

The [deadline for PARP and ERP Phase Two has been extended to July 14, 2023](#). With the deadline quickly approaching, it's important that we clear up confusion about how to apply, what documents are required for participation, insurance requirements and related misinformation making its way across the countryside.

Now, let's do some myth-busting.

Myth #1 – You need to submit a completed tax return to FSA to apply for ERP Phase Two or PARP.

While these programs are based on revenue losses, you do not need a tax return, completed or otherwise, to apply for assistance. In fact, we have an [ERP Phase 2 tool](#) and [PARP tool](#) that walk you through the process step by step.

We understand that you may have questions for your certified public accountant or tax preparer, who was likely been hard to reach prior to the April 18 Internal Revenue Service tax deadline but we encourage you to download the program decision tools and get started. You'll probably discover that you already have on hand much of the information you need.

The following supporting materials will help you:

- Schedule F (Form 1040); and
- *Profit or Loss from Farming* or similar tax documents for tax years 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022 for ERP and for calendar years 2018, 2019, and 2020 for PARP.

The only reason you *might* have to provide your tax returns to FSA is in the event of a spot check or a request from the FSA County Committee.

Myth #2 – You cannot receive an ERP Phase Two payment if you received a payment under Phase One.

It's possible that you can still receive ERP Phase Two benefits if you received an ERP Phase One payment. There is also a possibility that your Phase Two payment may be offset.

Myth #3 – ERP Phase Two was intended to be an additional payment to those who received payment under Phase One.

ERP Phase Two was never designed or intended to be an additional payment. Instead, it was intended to assist those producers who did not receive relief in Phase One.

[Click here to read the full blog and view a producer testimonial on the application process.](#)

USDA Develops Simplified Direct Loan Application to Improve Customer Service

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has developed a simplified direct loan application to provide improved customer experience for producers applying for loans from the Farm Service Agency (FSA). The simplified direct loan application enables producers to complete a more streamlined application, reduced from 29 to 13 pages. Producers will also have the option to complete an electronic fillable form or prepare a traditional, paper application for submission to their local FSA farm loan office. The paper and electronic versions of the form will be available starting March 1, 2023.

Approximately 26,000 producers submit a direct loan application to the FSA annually, but there is a high rate of incomplete or withdrawn applications, due in part to a challenging and lengthy paper-based application process. Coupled with the Loan Assistance Tool released in October 2022, the simplified application will provide all loan applicants access to information regarding the application process and assist them with gathering the correct documents before they begin the process. This new application will help farmers and ranchers submit complete loan applications and reduce the number of incomplete, rejected, or withdrawn applications.

In October 2022, USDA launched the Loan Assistance Tool, an online step-by-step guide that provides materials to help an applicant prepare their farm loan application in one tool. Farmers can access the Loan Assistance Tool by visiting farmers.gov/farm-loan-assistance-tool and clicking the 'Get Started' button. The tool is built to run on any modern browser like Chrome, Edge, Firefox, or the Safari browser. A version compatible with mobile devices is expected to be available by the summer. It does not work in Internet Explorer.

The simplified direct loan application and Loan Assistance Tool are the first of multiple farm loan process improvements that will be available to USDA customers on farmers.gov in the future. Other improvements that are anticipated to launch in 2023 include:

- An interactive online direct loan application that gives customers a paperless and electronic signature option, along with the ability to attach supporting documents such as tax returns.
- An online direct loan repayment feature that relieves borrowers from the necessity of calling, mailing, or visiting a local Service Center to pay a loan installment.

USDA provides access to credit to approximately 115,000 producers who cannot obtain sufficient commercial credit through direct and guaranteed farm loans. With the funds and direction Congress provided in Section 22006 of the Inflation Reduction Act, USDA took action in October 2022 to [provide relief to qualifying distressed borrowers](#) while working on making transformational changes to loan servicing so that borrowers are provided the flexibility and opportunities needed to address the inherent risks and unpredictability associated with agricultural operations.

Soon, all direct loan borrowers will receive a letter from USDA describing the circumstances under which additional payments will be made to distressed borrowers and how they can work with their FSA local office to discuss these options. Producers can explore all available options on all FSA loan options at fsa.usda.gov or by contacting their [local USDA Service Center](#).

USDA Hiring Engineers, Natural Resource Specialists Nationwide to Strengthen Inflation Reduction Act Implementation, Enhance Agricultural Conservation

USDA announced it is ramping up hiring for key positions that will help strengthen agricultural conservation efforts and turn President Biden's Investing in America agenda into action. The available positions include engineers, civil engineering technicians and natural resource specialists, building on other large-scale hiring announcements earlier this year.



Today's announcement is funded by \$19.5 billion from President Biden's Inflation Reduction Act. The new NRCS engineers and engineering technicians will play a critical role in solving a host of natural resource problems for agricultural producers and local communities. Their projects may involve stream restoration, erosion control, developing water systems for livestock, improving and conserving irrigation water and restoring wetlands. They may also help communities recover from natural disasters.

Natural resource specialists perform a variety of duties to help landowners meet their conservation objectives. This may include assisting in the implementation of conservation plans, conducting scientific studies and performing on-site evaluations with customers. Their work enhances conservation program delivery and helps build resilient farms and communities across America.

How to Apply

NRCS posted an announcement for engineering technicians on June 26 and natural resource specialists on July 3. Interested candidates can find more information and apply by searching for these job titles on USAjobs.gov.

To qualify for these positions, candidates must meet the education requirements, or a combination of education and experience requirements, as outlined in the job announcement. General qualifications for the engineering and natural resource management job series are also available on OPM.gov. Additional information on career opportunities at NRCS is available on the agency's [careers webpage](#).

More Information

Over the next several years, NRCS expects to add over 4,400 new employees to its federal workforce, in addition to over 3,000 team members through partner organizations, to help with Inflation Reduction Act implementation.

NRCS is a federal agency that helps farmers, ranchers and forest landowners conserve soil, water and other natural resources. Employees provide technical expertise and conservation planning. Financial assistance is available for a wide variety of conservation programs. NRCS has offices in USDA Service Centers nationwide.



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Mary Ann Boles, Vice-chair
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Darcy Kaisler, Member
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Next COC meeting: TBD