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CED Comments, Upcoming Dates/Deadlines, and a Few Jokes

Happy May! Its Derby Week, the sun is out, and the weather is finally warming up after a long winter.



Acreage Reporting- We have maps printed for each of the farms for the 2023 season. Please call or swing by the office to report your acres after they are planted or to pick up your maps. **The deadline to complete acreage reports for spring crops, perennial grasses, and CRP is July 15, 2023.**

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)- Grasslands CRP Sign-Up has begun! Current rates are \$13 per acre. Please contact Jennifer to create an offer. **The deadline to put in an offer is May 26, 2023.**

ERP Phase 2 & PARP- There are 2 new programs we are running a signup for currently. ERP Phase 2 and PARP are revenue based programs that provide benefits for a loss in revenue due to weather or the pandemic. Please contact Kate 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 June 2, 2023.**

Drought Related Livestock Programs- We are closely monitoring the drought monitor. We are currently in a D3 drought which will trigger Goshen County's eligibility for 2023 LFP as well as 2023 ELAP for water, feed, and livestock hauling. Please start gathering your leases, livestock documents, and transportation records for these programs. Payments for LFP will be approximately \$100/head on eligible livestock. Please contact Kate to complete these applications or for more information.

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Upcoming Deadlines/Dates:

May 26- CRP Grasslands Sign-Up Deadline for Offers

May 28- National Hamburger Day

May 29- Office Closed- Memorial Day

June 2- Signup Deadline for ERP Phase 2 and PARP

June 19- Office Closed- Juneteenth

July 4- Office Closed- Independence Day

July 15- Acreage Reporting Deadline- Spring Planted Crops & Perennial Grasses

A Few Jokes to Brighten a Day

Which vegetables does a pirate never eat? Leeks.

How do mice floss their teeth? With string cheese.

What did one plate say to another plate? Tonight, dinner's on me.

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.

With a June 2, 2023, deadline to apply for both programs, 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.

Producers can [register for a free webinar](#) hosted by USDA and members of the National Farm Income Tax Extension Committee on Monday, May 1 at 2 p.m. eastern for a discussion on completing the ERP Phase Two application form.

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.](#)

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 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 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, 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 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 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 to find disaster assistance programs that can help their operation recover from natural disasters.

For more information, contact the Platte County USDA Service Center at 307-322-4050 or visit farmers.gov.

NRCS Announces \$75 Million to Assist Producers Transitioning to Organic as Part of USDA's Organic Transition Initiative

USDA announced its \$75 million investment in conservation assistance for producers transitioning to organic production. As part of the multi-agency [Organic Transition Initiative \(OTI\)](#), USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will dedicate financial and technical assistance to



a new organic management standard and partner with new organic technical experts to increase staff capacity and expertise.

The investment, which includes funds from the 2020 Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), will help build new and better markets and income streams, strengthen local and regional food systems and increase affordable food supply for more Americans, while promoting climate-smart agriculture and ensuring equity for all producers.

Direct Farmer Assistance

NRCS will dedicate \$70 million to assist producers with a [new organic management standard](#) under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

NRCS will help producers adopt the new organic management standard, which allows flexibility for producers to get the assistance and education they need such as attending workshops or requesting help from experts or mentors. It supports conservation practices required for organic certification and may provide foregone income reimbursement for dips in production during the transition period.

Higher payment rates and other options are available for underserved producers including socially disadvantaged, beginning, veteran, and limited resource farmers and ranchers.

How to Apply

Eligible producers include farmers, ranchers, forest landowners, and other producers beginning or in the process of transitioning to organic certification. NRCS will announce state-specific deadlines later this year, after which producers can apply through NRCS at their local [USDA Service Center](#).

Notice of Funding for Seven New Positions

NRCS will dedicate \$5 million to partner with six organic technical experts through five-year agreements. The organic experts will develop regional networks and support NRCS staff who provide services to USDA customers. These services include hosting hands-on organic training and fielding organic-related staff questions. One organic research position will support this network. A [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#), closing on June 11, 2023, outlines requirements for proposals from regional organizations and partners.

For more information, visit farmers.gov/organic.

Protect Your Investments in the Soil: USDA's Modernized Lab Data Mart Website Provides User-Friendly, State-of-the-Art Data

Understanding your specific soil and its dynamic properties, which can change over time due to human impacts, land management, and climate change, can be invaluable. The USDA's [Natural Resources Conservation Service \(NRCS\)](#), through the [National Cooperative Soil Survey \(NCSS\)](#), has a team of soil and data scientists who are bringing customers the best soil information using the newest technology through the Lab Data Mart.

The newly updated [Lab Data Mart](#) website, also known as the National Cooperative Lab Characterization Database, brings valuable soil data to the public's fingertips through a user-friendly, state-of-the-art interactive map. It includes data estimating soil properties such as organic carbon, clay content, calcium carbonate equivalent, and pH, which is beneficial in soil health assessments. Architects, educators, engineers, farmers, landowners, researchers, scientists, and anyone looking to learn more about their soil can access the latest data to make more informed decisions and reduce potential [soil risks and hazards](#).

The Lab Data Mart includes mid-infrared (MIR) soil spectroscopy data gathered during soil analysis at the NRCS' Kellogg Soil Survey Laboratory, one of the largest libraries of such data in the world. MIR soil spectroscopy uses the interactions between soil matter and infrared radiation to estimate soil properties.

The Lab Data Mart's interactive map also links to a national database of soil characterization data, allowing users to locate soil samples and "pedons" analyzed in the lab. A pedon is the smallest unit of soil, containing all the soil horizons of a particular soil type. The customized data in the Lab Data Mart is downloadable to multiple applications and web services and is continuously updated as more sampled soil sites are added or re-visited.

How Can the Lab Data Mart Help You?

- **Determining carbon credits or improving carbon sequestration:** The data can help you determine how much carbon is currently in the top 12 inches of soil and decide whether you want to sequester more carbon and consider methods and management practices to do so.
- **Leasing or buying land:** The data may help determine if your planned management practices will work; and if not, what could be the added cost to do things differently. Understanding the mineralogy of your soil can help you determine if it requires soil amendments, a new tool or piece of equipment to accomplish your goals, or a change to what you farm or your tillage operation.
- **Taking a more systematic view of your land:** Whether working with an NRCS conservation planner or on your own, the data helps you know more about your soil and ties into how you look at the whole [ecological site](#).

Who Can Help You Use Lab Data Mart and Help You Understand Your Data?

NRCS State Soil Scientists and their staff, as well as technical service providers, can assist with obtaining the data in Lab Data Mart and understanding it. Contact NRCS at your [local USDA Service Center](#) for help and more information. Visit the [Lab Data Mart website](#), or learn more about NRCS' [Soil Science](#).



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