



- [A Message from the CED](#)
- [USDA to Begin Issuing \\$1.75 Billion to Agricultural Producers Through Critical Emergency Relief Programs](#)
- [Making Your Land More Resilient to Drought](#)
- [Applying for FSA Guaranteed Loans](#)

---

## A Message from the CED

Over the past two days, our office has processed hundreds of payments to Platte County livestock producers. I wanted to take a moment to explain what these are and why you are receiving them.

If you received 2021 and/or 2022 Livestock Forage Program (LFP) benefits, you should be seeing a payment in your account over the next few days. These payments are based on your 2021 and/or 2022 LFP application, so no action was required by producers for these payments to be processed. Please see the article below for more information.

Our office will be closed Monday, October 9th, in observance of Columbus Day. As always, if you have any questions about FSA or NRCS programs, feel free to call or stop by the office.

Until next time,

Pam Metz  
County Executive Director

---

## USDA to Begin Issuing \$1.75 Billion to Agricultural Producers Through Critical Emergency Relief Programs

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced that it will begin issuing more than \$1.75 billion in emergency relief payments to eligible farmers and livestock producers. These much-needed payments are helping farming and ranching operations recover following natural disasters in 2020, 2021 and 2022.



### Emergency Livestock Relief Program

This week, FSA will issue more than \$581 million in 2021 and 2022 drought and wildfire emergency relief to eligible ranchers.

FSA is closing out the [Emergency Livestock Relief Program](#) (ELRP) for losses suffered in 2021. ELRP Phase Two payments are estimated at \$115.7 million. Ranchers who lost grazing acres due to drought and wildfire and received assistance through ELRP Phase One will soon receive an additional payment through ELRP Phase Two. This second payment will be equal to 20% of the 2021 gross ELRP Phase One payment. ELRP Phase Two payments to producers will be automatic with no application required. In April 2022, FSA staff processed more than 100,000 payments through ELRP Phase One and paid eligible ranchers more than \$600 million for 2021 grazing losses.

In 2022, ranchers continued to experience significant loss of grazing acres due to drought and wildfire. To help mitigate these losses, eligible ranchers will receive ELRP disaster assistance payments for increases in supplemental feed costs. To expedite payments, determine producer eligibility and calculate the ELRP 2022 payment, FSA is using livestock inventories and drought-affected forage acreage or restricted animal units and grazing days due to wildfire already reported to FSA by ranchers when they submitted their Livestock Forage Disaster Program applications. ELRP payments for 2022 losses are estimated at \$465.4 million and will be automatic with no application required.

### **Emergency Relief Program Phase Two**

FSA is closing out Phase Two of the [Emergency Relief Program](#) (ERP) this week through the delivery of more than \$1.17 billion in crop disaster assistance payments to producers of eligible crops who suffered losses, measured through decreases in revenue, due to qualifying natural disaster events that occurred in calendar years 2020 and 2021. ERP Phase Two was intended primarily for producers of crops that were not covered by federal crop insurance or FSA's Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP). Previously, through ERP Phase one, FSA staff processed more than 300,000 applications and paid an estimated 217,000 eligible producers more than \$7.4 billion.

### **More Information**

These programs represent a few of FSA's extensive commodity, conservation, credit, disaster recovery and safety-net programs. By the close of the fiscal year on Sept. 30, for all farm and farm loan programs — including vital access to [capital for distressed borrowers](#) — USDA, through the delivery of FSA programs, will have invested more than \$19 billion in America's agricultural producers with more economic support on the way in fiscal year 2024.

For more information on available FSA programs, contact your [local USDA Service Center](#).

---

## **Making Your Land More Resilient to Drought**

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service can help you conserve water and build resilience to drought, through conservation practices that improve irrigation efficiency, boost soil health, and manage grazing lands.

### **Irrigation Efficiency**

USDA helps you improve your irrigation efficiency to ensure each drop of water is used wisely. Saving water on your farm can help during drought and can offset rising water costs; reduce expenditures for energy, chemicals, and labor; and enhance revenues through higher crop yields and improved crop quality. Funded conservation practices include conversion to more efficient irrigation systems, such as micro-irrigation or subsurface drip irrigation, installation of irrigation pipeline, irrigation water management, structures for water control, and flow meters. Tools like drip irrigation, which provides water precisely where and when it's needed, can achieve greater precision with flow meters and soil moisture sensors.

### **Soil Health**

In addition, soil health conservation practices, such as reduced- or no-till, cover crops, mulching and residue management can help to make your soil, and the plants you grow or animals you raise, healthier. Healthier soil can absorb and retain more water for longer periods of time, making your farm or ranch more resilient to drought. Using soil health practices, you can conserve water by increasing your soil's water-holding capacity and use conservation tillage to keep the ground covered, reducing water loss through transpiration and evaporation.

And soil health practices increase organic matter, and each pound of organic matter can hold up to 20 pounds of water. Every 1% increase in organic matter results in as much as 25,000 gallons of soil water per acre. Each 1% increase in organic matter can also provide up to 30 pounds of more available nitrogen per acre. That means less money and time spent on inputs like water and fertilizer, which make your operation more profitable.

## Rotational/Prescribed Grazing, Water Sources for Livestock

Drought also impacts grazing lands, and NRCS works with you to increase the resilience of your livestock operation. Ranchers can adapt to dry conditions in two main ways: increasing the availability and suitability of forage and ensuring that cattle have an adequate and reliable source of water. For forage, rotational or prescribed grazing (rotating cattle among pastures) can relieve pressure on stressed vegetation and ensure a more consistent supply of forage for animals. NRCS conservationists can also work with you to plant more drought-tolerant forage species, plants best suited to local soils and conditions. For reliable sources of water, NRCS can help you with installing watering facilities, water wells, or water pipeline for livestock. Having available forage and water for livestock can make a big difference in difficult drought conditions.

USDA and NRCS are here for you, helping you recover from drought and prepare for the next one. For more information on drought recovery assistance at [farmers.gov/protection-recovery/drought#recovery](https://farmers.gov/protection-recovery/drought#recovery). For more information on conservation practices to make your operation more resilient to drought in future years, go to [www.nrcs.usda.gov](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov).

---

## Applying for FSA Guaranteed Loans

FSA guaranteed loans allow lenders to provide agricultural credit to farmers who do not meet the lender's normal underwriting criteria. Farmers and ranchers apply for a guaranteed loan through a lender, and the lender arranges for the guarantee. FSA can guarantee up to 95 percent of the loss of principal and interest on a loan. Guaranteed loans can be used for both farm ownership and operating purposes.

Guaranteed farm ownership loans can be used to purchase farmland, construct or repair buildings, develop farmland to promote soil and water conservation or to refinance debt.

Guaranteed operating loans can be used to purchase livestock, farm equipment, feed, seed, fuel, farm chemicals, insurance and other operating expenses.

FSA can guarantee farm ownership and operating loans up to \$2,037,000. Repayment terms vary depending on the type of loan, collateral and the producer's ability to repay the loan. Operating loans are normally repaid within seven years and farm ownership loans are not to exceed 40 years.

For more information on guaranteed loans, contact the Platte County USDA Service Center at 307-322-4050 or visit [fsa.usda.gov](https://fsa.usda.gov).

---



### USDA Service Center

1502 Progress Ct  
Wheatland, WY 82201

Phone: 307-322-4050  
Fax: 855-415-3444

**Pamela Metz**  
County Executive Director  
[pamela.metz@usda.gov](mailto:pamela.metz@usda.gov)

**Rob Weppener**  
Farm Loan Manager  
[rob.weppner@usda.gov](mailto:rob.weppner@usda.gov)

**Kelly Brown**-Farm Programs PT  
[kelly.brown3@usda.gov](mailto:kelly.brown3@usda.gov)

**Terri Skiba**-Farm Programs PT  
[terri.skiba@usda.gov](mailto:terri.skiba@usda.gov)

**Heidi Platt**-Farm Loan Analyst  
[heidi.platt@usda.gov](mailto:heidi.platt@usda.gov)

**Anna Troupe**-Farm Loan PT  
[anna.troupe@usda.gov](mailto:anna.troupe@usda.gov)

**Chris Campton**  
District Conservationist  
[christopher.campton@usda.gov](mailto:christopher.campton@usda.gov)

**NRCS Staff**  
Jenna Lincoln-Range Specialist

**Heather Ferguson-Ultima**

**County Committee:**  
Amy Miller  
Dareth Smialek  
Chuck Maike

**Next County Committee Meeting:**  
TBD