

November 2020



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

GovDelivery

Having trouble viewing this email? [View it as a Web page.](#)

- [USDA Offers Annual Installment Deferral Option for Farm Storage Facility Loan Borrowers](#)
- [Enrollment Begins for Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage Programs for 2021](#)
- [More than \\$7 Billion Paid in Second Round of USDA Coronavirus Food Assistance Program](#)
- [Dairy Margin Coverage Program Enrollment for 2021 Opens Oct. 13](#)
- [Ask USDA available to answer questions about FSA programs](#)

Connecticut FSA Newsletter

Connecticut Farm Service Agency

344 Merrow Road, Suite B
Tolland, CT 06084-3917

Phone: 860-871-4090
Fax: 855-934-2463

www.fsa.usda.gov/ct

State Executive Director:
Clark J. Chapin

State Committee:
Bonnie Burr, *Chair*
Melissa Dziurgot
Bruce Gresczyk

USDA Offers Annual Installment Deferral Option for Farm Storage Facility Loan Borrowers

To assist Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) borrowers experiencing financial hardship from the pandemic and other challenges in production agriculture, USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is offering a one-time annual installment payment deferral option. No fees or prepayment penalties apply for borrowers who choose this FSFL loan flexibility option.

Eligible borrowers can request a one-time only annual installment payment deferral for loans having terms of three, five, seven or ten years. The installment deferral option is not available for 12-year term loans.

The FSFL installment payments will remain the same, except for the last year. The original loan interest rate and annual payment due date will remain the same. However, because the installment payment deferral is a one-year loan term extension, the final payment will be higher due to additional accrued interest.

Diane Karabin
Paul Miller

Borrowers interested in exercising the one-time annual installment deferral option should contact FSA to make the request and to obtain, complete and sign required forms.

State Office Staff:

Nathan Wilson,
District Director

FSFLs provide low-interest financing for producers to store, handle and transport eligible commodities.

More Information

Doris Ostrowski,
Administrative Officer

In addition to offering flexibilities for FSFLs, FSA has also made other flexibilities to help producers impacted by the pandemic, including relaxing the loan-making process for farm operating and ownership loans and implementing the Disaster Set-Aside provision that enables an upcoming installment on a direct loan to be set aside for the year. More information on these flexibilities can be found at farmers.gov/coronavirus.

Sarah Fournier,
Program Specialist

Rebecca Palmer,
Program Specialist

Jule Dybdahl,
Administrative Specialist

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 may also be 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.

To find county office locations, program information, and more visit the new [Farmers.gov](https://farmers.gov) portal

For more information, contact your local USDA Service Center. To locate your local FSA office, visit farmers.gov/service-center-locator.

Enrollment Begins for Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage Programs for 2021

Agricultural producers can now make elections and enroll in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for the 2021 crop year. The signup period opened Tuesday, Oct. 13. These key U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) safety-net programs help producers weather fluctuations in either revenue or price for certain crops, and more than \$5 billion in payments are in the process of going out to producers who signed up for the 2019 crop year.

Enrollment for the 2021 crop year closes March 15, 2021.

ARC provides income support payments on historical base acres when actual crop revenue declines below a specified guaranteed level. PLC provides income support payments on historical base acres when the effective price for a covered commodity falls below its reference price.

Covered commodities include 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.

2021 Elections and Enrollment

Producers can elect coverage and enroll in crop-by-crop ARC-County or PLC, or ARC-Individual for the entire farm, for the 2021 crop year. Although election changes for 2021 are optional, enrollment (signed contract) is required for each year of the program. If a producer has a multi-year contract on the farm and makes an election change for 2021, it will be necessary to sign a new contract.

If an election is not submitted by the deadline of March 15, 2021, the election defaults to the current election for crops on the farm from the prior crop year.

For crop years 2022 and 2023, producers will have an opportunity to make new elections during those signups. Farm owners cannot enroll in either program unless they have a share interest in the farm.

2019 Crop Year ARC and PLC Payments

FSA began processing payments last week for 2019 ARC-County (ARC-CO) and PLC on covered commodities that met payment triggers on farms enrolled for the 2019 crop year. In addition to the \$5 billion now in process, FSA anticipates it will issue additional payments by the end of November for 2019 commodities covered under ARC-Individual (ARC-IC) and additional commodities that trigger PLC and ARC-CO payments for which rates have not yet been published

Producers who had 2019 covered commodities enrolled in ARC-CO can visit the [ARC and PLC webpage](#) for payment rates applicable to their county and each covered commodity. For farms and covered commodities enrolled in 2019 PLC, the following crops met payment triggers: barley, canola, chickpeas (small and large), corn, dry peas, grain sorghum, lentils, peanuts, seed cotton and wheat.

Oats and soybeans did not meet 2019 PLC payment triggers.

2019 PLC payment rates for the following covered commodities have not been determined: crambe, flaxseed, long and medium grain rice, mustard seed, rapeseed, safflower, sesame seed, sunflower seed and temperate Japonica rice. Payment rates for these commodities will be announced at a later date.

Web-Based Decision Tools

In partnership with USDA, the University of Illinois and Texas A&M University offer web-based decision tools to assist producers in making informed, educated decisions using crop data specific to their respective farming operations. Tools include:

- [Gardner-farmdoc Payment Calculator](#), the University of Illinois tool that offers farmers the ability to run payment estimate modeling for their farms and counties for ARC-County and PLC.
- [ARC and PLC Decision Tool](#), the Texas A&M tool allows producers to analyze payment yield updates and expected payments for 2021. Producers who have used the tool in the past should see their username and much of their farm data already available in the system.

-

More Information

For more information on ARC and PLC, including two online decision tools that assist producers in making enrollment and election decisions specific to their operations, visit the [ARC and PLC webpage](#).

For additional questions and assistance, contact your local USDA service center. To locate your local FSA office, visit farmers.gov/service-locator.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Ask USDA available to answer questions about FSA programs

Ask USDA is now available as a tool for FSA customers to ask questions about FSA programs and services.

Ask USDA, available at ask.usda.gov is similar to AskFSA, which was decommissioned Sept. 21, but it also provides information for all USDA programs. Ask USDA allows USDA customers to search for and read answers about FSA programs and services in the same location as they read about other USDA programs and services.

Customers are able to submit questions through email, chat, and phone if they need more information. This improved customer service approach further builds on Secretary Sonny Perdue's OneUSDA vision and provides the customer a one-stop shopping experience that covers all of USDA's many programs.

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).