



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Newsletter - August 2022

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**SHARING OUR
SUCCESSSES**

MEET
Hokuao

A Hawaii middle school student who is carrying on his family's legacy in agriculture by showing steer and market hogs.

"The FSA loan allowed me to purchase my animals, feed and supplies needed in order to successfully raise my 4-H livestock projects," Hokuao says. "I would definitely recommend the youth loan program."

Calling all Youth Farmers!

Summer is over and it is back to the classrooms. It is time to reconnect with friends, teachers, and staff. It is a new year, new opportunity, and a new you.

Are you looking into after school activities, in search for a hobby, or even trying to pad that college resume? Why not consider adding farming or ranching to that list? You may have always had that calling to tend to farm animals or have a green thumb and love to grow food for yourself and others. Whether you have been doing it for years or just starting off, consider joining your local 4-H Club, Future Farmers of America (FFA), and other agricultural youth organizations.

If there was an idea you had but needed funds to make it happen- look no further, USDA can help fund your project through it's *Youth Loan Program*. Youth between the ages of 10-20 can apply for up to \$5,000 in loan funds.

Funds can be used for- but are not limited to feed, seed, tools, equipment, raising hens (egg layers), a cow calf operation, hog project, growing fruits, and vegetables.

Several years ago, local Molokai 4H member. Hokuao Arce took out a loan to fund his steer project. He showed his market steer named Easton, a Lim-Flex breed, at the Molokai Livestock County Expo.

On show day, Arce showed the steer with ease winning Grand Champion, and earning a spot in the County Expo Sale. Auction bidders pushed the price all the way to \$8 per pound. With the proceeds from this sale he was able to repay his loan with FSA and save money for his next project.

Details and information about the Youth Loan Program can be found on [Youth Loans \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/youth-loans).

However, nothing beats reaching out to your local agent at: [Hawaii and Pacific Basin Service Centers \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/hawaii-pacific-basin-service-centers). Please give us a call or stop by the office, we are waiting for you!

FSA is Adjusting to Fit the Situation Facing Livestock Producers

By Zach Ducheneaux, Administrator, Farm Service Agency

As a former rancher myself, I know the tremendous investments—in time, sweat, and thought—that producers make even before their calves hit the ground. My experiences lead me to firmly believe that, here at the Farm Service Agency (FSA), we must find flexibilities where possible to help our farmers and ranchers best meet the challenges of the day.

In recent meetings with Senator John Hoeven, FSA North Dakota State Executive Director Marcy Svenningsen, and livestock producers in North Dakota impacted by catastrophic 2021 winter storms, it became apparent that our Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) payment rates were not reflective of the true market value for non-adult beef, beefalo, bison, and dairy animals. It was time for us to pivot.

LIP provides benefits to livestock owners and some contract growers for livestock deaths exceeding normal mortality from eligible adverse weather events, certain predation losses and reduced sales prices due to injury from an eligible loss.

Indemnity payments are made at a rate of 75 percent of the market value of the livestock on the day before the date of death. I don't mind saying that, under our previous payment rates, cutting a LIP check to a rancher for \$150 for a calf in today's market came nowhere near covering the year-long investment in carrying the cow through pregnancy and carrying the calf from birth to sale.

To better capture ranchers' investments in their animals, we recently announced increased LIP payment rates for beef, beefalo, bison, and dairy animals less than 250 pounds. These now-updated payment rates are reflective of the substantial increased cost of these non-adult livestock in 2022:



The updated LIP payment rates are effective immediately and will be applied retroactively starting January 1, 2022, for all eligible causes of loss including excessive heat, tornado, winter storms, and other qualifying natural disasters. Producers who have already received LIP payments for 2022 will receive an additional payment, if applicable, commensurate with these updated rates. For details on eligibility and payment rates, you can review our [LIP fact sheet](#).

Other Program Improvements

These LIP policy changes complement enhancements we recently made to our [Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees and Farm-Raised Fish Program \(ELAP\)](#)

– changes that also were derived from the direct input and feedback of producers and the livestock groups.

In addition to paying above normal costs for hauling water to drought-stricken livestock, we also added compensation for hauling feed to livestock and livestock to forage or other grazing acres. And, in 2021, we added fish raised for food as an ELAP-eligible commodity because producers and industry leaders expressed the need.

By continually evaluating how we can deliver our programs in a manner that is meaningful to the farmers and ranchers we serve, we demonstrate our ongoing commitment to stakeholder engagement and our dedication to improving programs for livestock producers first signaled by Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack during a Senate Agriculture Committee hearing earlier this year.

It has been said actions speak louder than words, but when it comes to FSA programs that directly affect producers' livelihoods and way of life and ultimately impact food security for all Americans, I believe the two are not mutually exclusive. Rest assured that when producers and producer groups speak, FSA and I, to the extent possible, will do whatever is within our power to turn those words into actions.

Conservation Innovation Grants On-Farm Trials Funding Opportunity Announced

Applications are being accepted through September 22.

NRCS announced today it will make \$25 million available this year for the [Conservation Innovation Grants](#) (CIG) On-Farm Conservation Innovation Trials program. This year's funding priorities are climate-smart agricultural solutions, irrigation water management, nutrient management and soil health. The [funding opportunity](#) can be found on [grants.gov](#). For more information, view the [news release](#).



County Committee Spotlight: Thoune Hongphao



Throughout the County Committee election period USDA's <https://www.farmers.gov/blog> will be introducing county committee members from across the nation. For insight into why COC members are currently serving our communities and what they find rewarding about their work, check out the blog stories below. The most recent addition highlights Honolulu County's current Chairperson Thoune Hongphao.

[Click here to read Thoune's story of service.](#)

Disaster Assistance for 2022 Livestock Forage Losses

Producers in Kauai County are eligible to apply for 2022 Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) benefits on native pasture and improved pasture.

LFP provides compensation if you suffer grazing losses for covered livestock due to drought on privately owned or cash leased land or fire on federally managed land.

County committees can only accept LFP applications after notification is received by the National Office of qualifying drought or if a federal agency prohibits producers from grazing normal permitted livestock on federally managed lands due to qualifying fire. You must complete a CCC-853 and the required supporting documentation no later than January 30, 2023, for 2022 losses.

For additional information about LFP, including eligible livestock and fire criteria, contact the Kauai County USDA Service Center at 808-245-9014 ext. 2 or visit fsa.usda.gov.

USDA Invests \$14.5 Million in Taxpayer Education, Program Outreach Efforts for Farmers and Ranchers

FSA is investing in two outreach and education efforts for farmers and ranchers, including those who are new to agriculture or who have been historically underserved by programs.

First, FSA is announcing \$10 million in the new Taxpayer Education and Asset Protection Initiative. Through this initiative, FSA has partnered with the University of Arkansas and the National Farm Income Tax Extension Committee to deliver tax education resources for farmers and ranchers, which includes engagement with agricultural educators, and tax professionals through partnerships with community groups and minority serving institutions across the country.

Second, FSA is investing \$4.5 million in outreach for the Conservation Reserve Program Transition Incentives Program (CRP TIP), which increases access to land for new farmers and ranchers. FSA will award cooperative agreements to 15 to 20 partner and stakeholder organizations to conduct outreach and technical assistance and promote awareness and understanding among agricultural communities, particularly those who are military veterans, new to farming, or historically underserved.

[Click here for more information.](#)

August Interest Rates

Farm Operating- Direct 4.000%
Farm Operating - Microloan 4.000%
Farm Ownership - Direct 4.250%
Farm Ownership - Microloan 4.250%
Farm Ownership - Direct, Joint Financing 2.500%
Farm Ownership - Down Payment 1.500%
Emergency Loan - Amount of Actual Loss 3.750%

Dates to Remember

September 2, 2022 - Deadline to apply for the Reimbursement Transportation Cost Payment Program (RTCP)

January 30, 2023 - Deadline to apply for 2022 Disaster Assistance for Livestock Forage Losses



USDA website: <https://www.usda.gov/>
Farmer.gov website: <https://www.farmers.gov/>

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