News & Updates from the Iowa Farm Service Agency

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News & Updates from the Iowa Farm Service Agency - June 1, 2023

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From the Desk of Matt Russell, State Executive Director

As I travel the state meeting with the Iowa FSA team members in our county offices, with farmers at field days, and among organizational leaders at events, much of Iowa is in pretty good shape. We're finishing up planting and diving into our first cutting of hay. But there are places across Iowa threatened by existing or emerging challenges.

As our family adjusts our rotational grazing plan, we're dealing with ponds that are headed towards empty. They have water now, but the decline is noticeable by the week. We usually manage for grass this time of year. Instead, we're managing around the ponds and trying to deal with the risk of them being too empty for watering cattle if we don't get substantial rain this month. Farmers are always trying to manage their risks and leverage their opportunities. In pockets around the state and in some places going into a third year in a row, the weather threats and challenges are critical.

As you navigate your risks and opportunities, please continue to lean into your relationship with your local FSA office. Americans continue to invest in resources delivered by Iowa USDA. Coming out of a pandemic, public investments in farmers and ranchers made the difference between families staying on the land and families exiting agriculture as the United States successfully stopped and then restarted our economy. We've also experienced historical weather events that put farming families' livelihoods on the line. In the past five years, existing programs in the 2018 Farm Bill and ad hoc programs in response to market, weather, and pandemic threats have provided billions of dollars of support to Iowa farming families.

We are in the final weeks of two new revenue programs to assist farmers and ranchers who have losses not yet covered by other USDA safety net support efforts. The Emergency Relief Program (ERP) Phase Two focuses on producers who have suffered a decrease in allowable gross revenue in 2020 or 2021 due to necessary expenses related to losses of eligible crops from a qualifying natural disaster event. The Pandemic Assistance Revenue Program (PARP) focuses on producers who had at least a 15% decrease in allowable gross revenue for the 2020 calendar year compared to the benchmark years of either 2018 or 2019.

Both programs take a new approach by dealing with decreases in gross revenue. While this new approach may at first appear difficult or time consuming, USDA has a lot of resources to help farmers and ranchers navigate these programs on Farmers.gov We've also just recently extended the deadline for these programs until July 14, 2023.

We encourage lowa farmers who haven't yet looked at ERP Phase II and PARP to do so. Farmers who took a quick look earlier, may want to take another look with the deadline extended. There are videos, online tools, myth-buster resources, and of course your county office staff to help you navigate these new approaches to providing support to keep lowa farming families on the land. Make sure you take advantage of the extended deadlines and helpful tools to explore these safety net programs to help families stay on their farms and ranches.

Finally, it takes agricultural leaders in our county offices to deliver these resources to lowa producers. The Biden-Harris Administration continues to encourage USDA to hire. We have a <u>careers page</u> at lowa FSA. You can check this <u>page</u> for job openings at lowa FSA. Tomorrow, we open another round of hiring into our County Executive Director Training (CEDT) program. We continue to use a quadrant approach for applicants in this round of recruitment. More information about the application process can be <u>found here</u>. It's a great time to explore a career in agricultural leadership at lowa FSA.

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USDA Offers Assistance to Help Organic Dairy Producers Cover Increased Costs with the new Organic Dairy Marketing Assistance Program (ODMAP)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), announces assistance for dairy producers with the new Organic Dairy Marketing Assistance Program (ODMAP). ODMAP is established to help mitigate market volatility, higher input and transportation costs, and unstable feed supply and prices that have created unique hardships in the organic dairy industry. Specifically, under the ODMAP, USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is making \$104 million available to organic dairy operations to assist with projected marketing costs in 2023, calculated using their marketing costs in 2022.

FSA began accepting applications for ODMAP on May 24, 2023. Eligible producers include certified organic dairy operations that produce milk from cows, goats and sheep.

How ODMAP Works

FSA is providing financial assistance for a producer's projected marketing costs in 2023 based on their 2022 costs. ODMAP provides a one-time cost-share payment based on marketing costs on pounds of organic milk marketed in the 2022 calendar year.

ODMAP provides financial assistance that will immediately support certified organic dairy operations during 2023 keeping organic dairy operations sustainable until markets return to more normal conditions.

How to Apply

FSA is accepting applications from May 24 to July 26, 2023. To apply, producers should contact FSA at their local <u>USDA Service Center</u>. To complete the ODMAP application, producers must certify to pounds of 2022 milk production, how documentation of their organic certification, and submit a completed application form.

Organic dairy operations are required to provide their USDA certification of organic status confirming operation as an organic dairy in 2023 and 2022 along with the certification of 2022 milk production in hundredweight.

ODMAP complements other assistance available to dairy producers, including Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) and Supplemental DMC, with more than \$300 million in benefits paid for the 2023 program year to date. Learn more on the FSA Dairy Programs webpage.

More Information

To learn more about USDA programs, producers can contact their local <u>USDA Service</u> <u>Center</u>. Producers can also prepare maps for acreage reporting as well as manage farm loans and other programs by <u>logging into their farmers.gov account</u>. If you don't have an account, <u>sign up today</u>.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In the Biden-Harris administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit usda.gov.

USDA Extends Application Deadline for Revenue Loss Programs to July 14

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is extending the deadline for the Emergency Relief Program (ERP) Phase Two and Pandemic Assistance Revenue Program (PARP) to July 14, 2023, to give producers more time to apply for assistance. The original deadline was June 2.

Additionally, USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is partnering with nine organizations to provide educational and technical assistance to agricultural producers and provide assistance in completing an ERP Phase Two application. The extended deadline will give producers more time to work with these partner organizations and apply for assistance.

Cooperative Agreements for ERP Phase Two Application Assistance

Through cooperative agreements with FSA, the following organizations are providing free assistance to producers across the United States and territories.

- Alabama State Association of Cooperatives
- Farmers Legal Action Group, INC.
- Flower Hill Institute
- Intertribal Agriculture Council, Inc.
- North South Institute
- Renewing the Countryside II
- Rural Advancement Foundation International USA
- Rural Coalition
- Texas Small Farmers and Ranchers CBO

Depending on a producer's location, these nine partners can provide assistance either by phone or through online meeting software like Zoom or Microsoft Teams.

There is never a charge for technical assistance provided by FSA employees or cooperative agreement recipients. These organizations will assist producers with completing the application and any follow-up future insurance coverage requirements. Producers who receive ERP payments are statutorily required to purchase crop insurance or Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage for the next two available crop years. These organizations will not collect producer records, complete or sign the application form, or act on the producer's behalf in any way throughout this process.

Find more information on FSA cooperative agreements and contact information for the nine organizations please visit <u>fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/cooperative-agreements/index.</u>

PARP Application Assistance

USDA will host a webinar that focus on completing the PARP application form on June 8, 2023 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. eastern with members of the National Farm Income Tax Extension Committee. Register here.

Eligibility

To be eligible for ERP Phase Two, producers must have suffered a decrease in allowable gross revenue in 2020 or 2021 due to necessary expenses related to losses of eligible crops

from a qualifying natural disaster event. Assistance will be primarily to producers of crops that were not covered by Federal Crop Insurance or NAP, since crops covered by Federal Crop Insurance and NAP were included in the assistance under ERP Phase One.

To be eligible for PARP, an agricultural producer must have been in the business of farming during at least part of the 2020 calendar year and had a 15% or greater decrease in allowable gross revenue for the 2020 calendar year, as compared to a baseline year.

FSA offers an online <u>ERP tool</u> and <u>PARP tool</u> that can help producers determine what is considered allowable gross revenue for each respective program.

Producers should contact their local FSA office to make an appointment to apply for ERP Phase Two and PARP assistance. Producers should also keep in mind that July 15 is a major deadline to complete acreage reports for most crops. FSA encourages producers to complete the ERP Phase Two application, PARP application and acreage reporting during the same office visit.

More Information

For more information, view the <u>ERP Phase Two Fact Sheet</u>, <u>PARP Fact Sheet</u>, the <u>ERP Phase Two-PARP Comparison Fact Sheet</u>, <u>ERP Phase Two application video tutorial</u>, <u>PARP application video tutorial</u>, <u>myth-buster blog</u> or contact your local <u>USDA Service Center</u>.



USDA NASS Seeking Input from Farmers

USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is conducting major mid-year surveys that will collect information from farmers on 2023 planted acreage, current grain stocks, livestock inventories, and the value of land. Results on crop acreage and grain stocks will be published by NASS on June 30.

To obtain the most accurate data, NASS will be seeking input from over 4,700 producers across the state between May 22 and June 15 on the June Agricultural Survey and the June

Area Survey. NASS gathers the data for the June Agricultural Survey online at <u>agcounts.usda.gov</u>, by mail, phone and in-person interview. For the June Area Survey, agency representatives visit randomly selected tracts of land and interview the operators of any farm or ranch on that land by phone or in-person.

By taking a few minutes to participate, selected producers will not only help NASS provide data that levels the playing field for all farmers as they develop marketing plans for the year, giving them access to the same information as grain buyers, packers, and input suppliers, but also help provide the information used by many USDA conservation, loan, and support programs that farmers rely on.

Information provided by producers is kept strictly confidential, as required by federal law. NASS safeguards the privacy of all responses and publishes only state-level and national-level results, ensuring that no individual producer can be identified.

Results from the mid-year surveys will be published in a series of USDA reports, including the annual *Acreage* report and quarterly *Grain Stocks* report, both released on June 30, 2023. All reports will be made available on the NASS website at www.nass.usda.gov.

If you have any questions about how to complete a survey from the NASS, please call 800-772-0825.

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USDA Offers Livestock Disaster Program Flexibilities; Responds to Needs Expressed by Producers Hard-Hit by Natural Disasters

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) has provided additional flexibilities and further enhanced disaster recovery assistance provided by the Emergency Assistance for Livestock Honeybees, and Farm-raised Fish Program (ELAP), Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) and Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) in response to needs expressed by livestock producers across the U.S. who have experienced significant feed, forage and animal losses from natural disasters. These livestock disaster program policy enhancements include an extended June 2, 2023, deadline to submit notices of loss and applications for payment for 2022 losses. The deadline extension and program flexibilities are available to eligible producers nationwide who incurred losses from a qualifying natural disaster event.

LIP and ELAP reimburses producers for a portion of the value of livestock, poultry and other animals that died because of a qualifying natural disaster event or for loss of grazing acres, feed, and forage. LFP provides benefits for grazing losses due to a qualifying drought or wildfire. For fire, losses must occur on federally managed lands. ELAP provides benefits for grazing losses not covered under LFP.

New Program Applications for 2022

FSA is accepting 2022 LIP notices of loss and applications for payment through June 2, 2023, for all covered livestock that may have been eligible in 2022.

Producers who did not sign up for ELAP assistance for hauling livestock, forage and feedstuff hauling or other losses covered under ELAP in 2022 can also apply through June 2, 2023.

FSA will accept LFP applications for only newly eligible covered livestock through June 2, 2023.

All required supporting documentation must be received and on file in the county office by the established deadline.

Revising 2022 Applications

Producers who have a 2022 ELAP, LIP or LFP application on file with FSA as of the program deadline or were placed on an approved register, may revise their application with the newly updated eligible livestock no later than June 2, 2023.

Filing a Notice of Loss for ELAP due to 2022 and 2023 Drought

To support program access for counties that do not currently have a 365-day grazing season, FSA is waiving the 30-day timeframe for producers to submit a notice of loss for the 2023 ELAP program year due to qualifying drought in calendar years 2022 or 2023. Producers can now submit a notice of loss from the date the loss is apparent, as far back as Jan. 1, 2023, for 2022 eligible losses and 2023 eligible losses that occur before June 2, 2023.

For counties that have a 365-day grazing season, producers must have a qualifying drought in the 2023 calendar year to be eligible for 2023 livestock, water and feed hauling in 2023.

More Information

Livestock producers must provide evidence that livestock death was due to an eligible adverse weather event or loss condition. In addition, livestock producers should bring supporting evidence, including documentation of the number and kind of livestock that died, photographs or video records to document the loss, purchase records, veterinarian records, production records and other similar documents. Owners who sold injured livestock for a reduced price because the livestock were injured due to an adverse weather event, must provide verifiable evidence of the reduced sale of the livestock.

Producers can apply for ELAP, LFP and LIP benefits at their local FSA county office. For more information or to submit a notice of loss or an application for payment, please contact your local FSA office or visit farmers.gov/recover.

USDA Previews Emergency Relief Assistance for Agricultural Producers Who Incurred Losses Due to 2022 Natural Disaster Events

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced plans to roll out \$3.7 billion in <u>Emergency Relief Program (ERP)</u> and Emergency Livestock Relief Program (ELRP) assistance to crop and livestock producers who sustained losses due to a qualifying natural disaster event in calendar year 2022. USDA is sharing early information to allow producers time to gather documents in advance of program delivery. Through distribution of remaining funds, USDA is also concluding the 2021 ELRP program by sending payments in the amount of 20% of the initial ELRP payment to all existing recipients.

Background

On December 29, 2022, President Biden signed into law the *Disaster Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2023 (P.L. 117-328)* that provides about \$3.7 billion in financial assistance for agricultural producers impacted by wildfires, droughts, hurricanes, winter storms and other eligible disasters occurring in calendar year 2022.

Additionally, the Act specifically targets up to about \$500 million to livestock producers for losses incurred due to drought or wildfire in calendar year 2022.

ERP 2022 for Crop Producers

USDA, through the Farm Service Agency (FSA), intends to deploy the lessons learned from the development and implementation of ERP and ELRP for previous years' losses to ensure expedited assistance for 2022 losses.

Based on positive feedback from producers, stakeholder groups and FSA county office staff, USDA intends to provide an ERP track for producers who had coverage through Risk Management Agency's <u>federal crop insurance</u> or FSA's <u>Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program</u> (NAP). Through a streamlined application process, USDA intends to be in a position to send pre-filled applications directly to eligible producers in early summer.

For producers who have not been able to avail themselves of risk management coverage or whose losses were not covered, USDA intends to offer a program track to access ERP assistance with assistance provided to producers who suffered a decrease in allowable gross revenue in 2022 due to necessary expenses related to losses of eligible crops from a qualifying natural disaster event.

Instead of implementing these program tracks as two separate phases on different timelines, FSA intends to make both tracks available to producers at the same time, noting that the first track will follow a streamlined process with less paperwork burden, based on existing, available risk management data. The second ERP track would require that producers provide FSA with certain information related to revenue.

ELRP 2022 for Livestock Producers and Close Out of ELRP for 2021

For impacted ranchers, USDA intends to leverage FSA's Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) data to deliver ELRP assistance for increases in supplemental feed costs in 2022.

To be eligible for an ELRP payment for 2022 losses, livestock producers will need to have suffered grazing losses from wildfire or in a county rated by the U.S. Drought Monitor as having a D2 (severe drought) for eight consecutive weeks or a D3 (extreme drought) or higher level of drought intensity during the 2022 calendar year and have applied and been approved

for 2022 LFP. Additionally, otherwise eligible producers whose permitted grazing on federally managed lands was disallowed due to wildfire will also be eligible for ELRP payments if they applied and were approved for 2022 LFP.

In a continued effort to streamline and simplify the delivery of ELRP benefits, eligible producers will not be required to apply for payment.

Meanwhile, FSA also intends to provide additional assistance to ranchers for qualifying livestock losses from drought and wildfire in 2021. More information will be announced in the coming months.

How Producers Can Prepare

To participate in ERP and ELRP for 2022 losses, both crop and livestock producers should have or be prepared to have the following forms on file with FSA:

- Form AD-2047, Customer Data Worksheet (as applicable to the program participant);
- Form CCC-902, Farm Operating Plan for an individual or legal entity;
- Form CCC-901, Member Information for Legal Entities (if applicable); and
- Form AD-1026 Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELC) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification.

Most producers, especially those who have previously participated in FSA programs, will likely have these required forms on file. However, those who are uncertain or want to confirm should contact FSA at their local <u>USDA Service Center</u>.

In addition to the forms listed above, underserved producers are encouraged to register their status with FSA, using Form CCC-860, Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, Beginning and Veteran Farmer or Rancher Certification, as certain existing permanent and ad-hoc disaster programs provide increased benefits or reduced fees and premiums.

Producers with eligible crop losses who did not have federal crop insurance or NAP risk management coverage for 2022 and intend to apply for ERP assistance will need to pull together revenue information that is readily available from most tax records. FSA encourages producers to have their tax documents from the past few years and supporting materials ready including Schedule F (Form 1040) and *Profit or Loss from Farming* or similar tax documents. FSA will not require these forms to be submitted with the ERP application, but will require a certification, similar to Adjusted Gross Income certification that has been used for many years for Farm Bill programs. Applicants simply report and certify to the information required for the program.

Crop producers who have federal crop insurance coverage should ensure that information on file with their insurance agent is accurate and that any pending activities needed to file loss claims for 2022 losses are addressed as soon as possible. Producers who received ERP assistance last year or who will receive assistance for 2022 losses are required to purchase crop insurance or NAP for the next two crop years.

More Information

In the coming months, USDA intends to provide additional information on how to apply for assistance through ERP and ELRP for 2022 losses. Through proactive communications and outreach, USDA will keep producers and stakeholders informed as program eligibility, application and implementation details unfold.

Tree Assistance Program

If you're an orchardist or nursery tree grower who experienced losses from natural disasters during calendar year 2023, you must submit a TAP application either 90 calendar days after the disaster event or the date when the loss is apparent.

TAP provides financial assistance to help you replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes and vines damaged by natural disasters.

Eligible tree types include trees, bushes or vines that produce an annual crop for commercial purposes. Nursery trees include ornamental, fruit, nut and Christmas trees that are produced for commercial sale. Trees used for pulp or timber are ineligible.

To qualify for TAP, orchardists must suffer a qualifying tree, bush or vine loss in excess of 15 percent mortality from an eligible natural disaster, plus an adjustment for normal mortality. The eligible trees, bushes or vines must have been owned when the natural disaster occurred; however, eligible growers are not required to own the land on which the eligible trees, bushes and vines were planted.

If the TAP application is approved, the eligible trees, bushes and vines must be replaced within 12 months from the date the application is approved. The cumulative total quantity of acres planted to trees, bushes or vines, for which you can receive TAP payments, cannot exceed 1,000 acres annually.

USDA's Organic Certification Cost Share Program Assists Organic Producers recover costs associated with organic certification.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will cover up to 75% of the costs associated with organic certification, up to \$750 per category, through the Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP). USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) encourages agricultural producers and handlers to apply for OCCSP by Oct. 31, 2023, for expenses incurred from Oct. 1, 2022, through Sept. 30, 2023.

As part of USDA's broader effort to support organic producers and in response to stakeholder feedback, this year FSA increased the cost share to the maximum amount allowed by statute.

Cost Share for 2023

The cost share provides financial assistance for organic certification, and producers and handlers are eligible to receive 75% of the costs, up to \$750, for crops, wild crops, livestock, processing/handling and state organic program fees (California only).

Producers have until Oct. 31, 2023, to file applications, and FSA will make payments as applications are received.

How to Apply

To apply, organic producers and handlers should contact their local <u>USDA Service Center</u>. As part of completing the OCCSP application, producers and handlers will need to provide documentation of their organic certification and eligible expenses.

Organic producers and handlers may also apply for OCCSP through department of agriculture. Additional details can be found on the OCCSP webpage.

USDA Seeks Members for Federal Advisory Committee for Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production

USDA is seeking nominations for four positions on the Federal Advisory Committee for Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production. Nominations will be open to public from May 15, 2023, to July 15, 2023.

The 12-member Committee, which assembled in March 2022, is part of USDA's efforts to increase support for urban agriculture and innovative production. Members of the committee provide input on policy development and to help identify barriers to urban agriculture as USDA works to promote urban farming and the economic opportunities it provides in cities across the country.

Learn more.



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