



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Nebraska FSA and NRCS State Office Newsletter - October 2021

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A Message from the FSA Acting State Executive Director

It is already past the mid-point of October, with reports that corn harvest across the state is over 50 percent complete. As you wrap up the crop production season over the next weeks, and start preparations for winter, please be alert to the FSA business outlined below.

I particularly want to call attention to upcoming deadlines for 2022 applications for the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP). NAP provides coverage on losses from natural disasters on crops for which no permanent federal crop insurance is available. The application deadline for alfalfa, mixed forages and grass, and fruits such as apples, aronia berries and grapes, is fast approaching. Please review the article below to learn more about NAP and contact your county FSA soon to apply.

As you may recall, Nebraska FSA rolled out the Wildfires and Hurricanes Indemnity Program+, or WHIP+, and the Quality Loss Adjustment Program, or QLA, to assist

producers with financial losses due to severe weather, particularly the flooding and extreme moisture conditions of 2019. If you are a producer who received payments under either of these programs, I want to remind you of the requirement that you must obtain insurance for the following two crop years after receiving these payments. See the article below for more information.

Starting Nov. 1, FSA will be mailing out ballots for the 2021 election for County FSA Committees. Every FSA county office has an FSA County Committee elected by local producers. The counties each are divided into Local Administrative Areas (LAAs), and each year a different county LAA is up for election. Producers who live in an LAA that is up for election should receive a ballot in the mail in the early part of the month. Please take the time to return your ballot by the Dec. 6 deadline.

That's all for October. I hope you are having a safe and successful 2021 harvest season.

--Tim Divis, acting State Executive Director

An Invitation: Young, Beginning and Small Farmer Symposium

Nebraska USDA Farm Service Agency will be a presenter on a panel addressing beginner farmer financing as part of the Young, Beginner and Small Farmer Symposium scheduled for Nov. 8 at the East Union on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln East Campus.

The day-long symposium will include a series of fast-paced panel discussions to address the challenges facing young, beginning and small farming operations, to review existing programs for financing these producers, and to review innovative resource approaches for the farm of the future. Two panels will include current, young Nebraska producers who will discuss their agricultural operations.

Nebraska FSA Farm Loan Specialist Ben Herink will discuss FSA beginning farmer loan programs as part of the panel on "Stretching Resources for the Farm of the Future: Existing Programs."

Registration is now open for the symposium at <https://ianr.unl.edu/young-beginner-and-small-farmer-symposium>. Registration is required. There is no cost for the event.

The symposium is being coordinated by UNL's Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources and other key partners.

Application Deadlines Nearing for 2022 NAP Coverage for Grass, Alfalfa, Other Crops



The Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) provides financial assistance to you for crops that aren't eligible for crop insurance to protect against lower yields or crops unable to be planted due to natural disasters including freeze, hail, excessive moisture, excessive wind or hurricanes, flood, excessive heat and qualifying drought (includes native grass for grazing), among others.

In order to participate, you must obtain NAP coverage for the crop year by the applicable deadline using form CCC-471 "Application for Coverage" and pay the service fee.

NAP application deadlines can vary by county and by crop. However, some upcoming application deadlines for coverage in the 2022 production season include:

- Alfalfa, mixed forages and grass: Nov. 15, 2021
- Apples, aronia berries and grapes: Nov. 20, 2021

NAP covers losses from natural disasters on crops for which no permanent federal crop insurance program is available, including perennial grass forage and grazing crops, fruits, vegetables, mushrooms, floriculture, ornamental nursery, aquaculture, turf grass, ginseng, honey, syrup, bioenergy, and industrial crops.

NAP basic coverage is available at 55 percent of the average market price for crop losses that exceed 50 percent of expected production. Buy-up levels of NAP coverage are available if the producer can show at least one year of previously successfully growing the crop for which coverage is being requested. The buy-up coverage can be from 50 to 65 percent of expected production in 5 percent increments, at 100 percent of the average market price. Buy-up coverage is not available for crops intended for grazing.

For all coverage levels, the NAP service fee is the lesser of \$325 per crop or \$825 per producer per county, not to exceed a total of \$1,950 for a producer with farming interests in multiple counties. Producers qualifying as beginning, underserved, or limited resource farmers or those who can meet eligibility requirements as a military veteran are eligible for free catastrophic (basic) level of NAP coverage, as well as the potential for reduction in buy-up premiums.

To learn more about NAP, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/nap.

Linkage Requirements for Payments Received Under WHIP+, QLA

If you received a payment under the Wildfires and Hurricanes Indemnity Program+ (WHIP+) or the Quality Loss Adjustment Program (QLA) for crop production and/or quality losses occurring in 2018, 2019, or 2020 crop years, you are required to meet linkage requirements by obtaining federal crop insurance or Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage at the 60/100 level, or higher, for both the 2022 and 2023 crop years.

When applying for WHIP+ or QLA, form FSA-895 (Crop Insurance and/or NAP Coverage Agreement) was submitted acknowledging the requirement to obtain federal crop insurance, if available, or NAP coverage if federal crop insurance is not available. The

coverage requirement is applicable to the physical location county of the crop that received WHIP+ and/or QLA benefits.

Producers should not delay contacting their federal crop insurance agent or local county FSA Office to inquire about coverage options, as **failure to obtain the applicable coverage by the sales/application closing date will result in the required refund of WHIP+ benefits received on the applicable crop, plus interest.** You can determine if crops are eligible for federal crop insurance or NAP by [visiting the RMA website](#).

For more information, contact your county FSA office.

Deadline Is Nov. 15 for Fall-Seeded Crop Acreage Reports

An acreage report documents a crop grown on a farm or ranch and its intended uses. Filing an accurate and timely acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planted acreage, can prevent the loss of USDA program benefits.

How to File a Report

The fall acreage reporting deadline in Nebraska is Nov. 15 for fall-seeded crops such as winter wheat. To file a crop acreage report, you will need to provide:

- Crop and crop type or variety.
- Intended use of the crop.
- Number of acres of the crop.
- Map with approximate boundaries for the crop.
- Planting date(s).
- Planting pattern, when applicable.
- Producer shares.
- Irrigation practice(s).
- Acreage prevented from planting, when applicable.
- Other information as required.

Acreage Reporting Details

The following exceptions apply to acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.
- If a producer acquires additional acreage after the acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office.

Producers also can report fall-planted cover crop acres at this time.

Producers should report crop acreage they intended to plant, but due to natural disaster, were unable to plant. Prevented planting acreage must be reported on form CCC-576, Notice of Loss, no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date as established by FSA and USDA's Risk Management Agency.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policy holders should note that the acreage reporting date for NAP-covered crops is the earlier of the dates listed above or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins.

More Information

For questions, or to schedule an acreage reporting appointment, please contact your county FSA office.

Higher Loan Limit Now Available for USDA Guaranteed Farm Loans

USDA Extends Disaster Set-Aside for Direct Loans Until 2022

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced a higher loan limit will be available for borrowers seeking a guaranteed farm loan starting Oct. 1, 2021, from \$1.776 million to \$1.825 million.

FSA farm loans offer access to funding for a wide range of producer needs, from securing land to financing the purchase of equipment. Guaranteed loans are financed and serviced by commercial lenders. FSA provides up to a 95% guarantee against possible financial loss of principal and interest. Guaranteed loans can be used for both farm ownership and operating purposes.

In fiscal year 2021, FSA saw continued strong demand for guaranteed loans. FSA on a national basis obligated more than \$3.4 billion in guaranteed farm ownership and operating loans. This includes nearly \$1.2 billion for beginning farmers. The number of guaranteed borrowers has grown by 10% to more than 38,750 farmers and ranchers over the last decade. FSA expects the increasing demand for farm loans to continue into fiscal year 2022.

Disaster Set-Aside Extension

USDA has additional support available to producers given the recent outbreaks of the COVID-19 Delta variant and has extended the availability of COVID-19 Disaster Set-Aside (DSA) for installments due through Jan. 31, 2022. In addition, FSA will permit a second DSA for COVID-19 and a second DSA for natural disasters for those who had an initial COVID-19 DSA. Requests for a COVID-19 DSA or a second DSA must be received no later than May 1, 2022.

Last year, FSA broadened the use of the DSA. Normally used in the wake of natural disasters, the DSA can now allow farmers with USDA farm loans who are affected by COVID-19 and determined to be eligible, to have their next payment set aside. The set-

aside payment's due date is moved to the final maturity date of the loan or extended up to twelve months in the case of an annual operating loan. Any principal set-aside will continue to accrue interest until it is repaid. This will improve the borrower's cashflow in the current production cycle.

More Information

Producers can explore available options on all FSA loan options at fsa.usda.gov or by contacting their [local USDA Service Center](#).

Communication Is Key in Lending

Farm Service Agency (FSA) is committed to providing our farm loan borrowers the tools necessary to be successful. FSA staff will provide guidance and counsel from the loan application process through the borrower's graduation to commercial credit. While it is FSA's commitment to advise borrowers as they identify goals and evaluate progress, it is crucial for borrowers to communicate with their farm loan staff when changes occur. It is the borrower's responsibility to alert FSA to any of the following:

- Any proposed or significant changes in the farming operation
- Any significant changes to family income or expenses
- The development of problem situations
- Any losses or proposed significant changes in security

If a farm loan borrower can't make payments to suppliers, other creditors, or FSA on time, contact your farm loan staff immediately to discuss loan servicing options.

For more information on FSA farm loan programs, contact your county FSA farm loan team. To find the contact information for the nearest farm loan office, click on the [FSA office locator](#).

USDA Offers Online Tool for Drought-Stricken Ranchers to Estimate Compensation for Feed Transportation Costs

An online tool is now available to help ranchers document and estimate payments to cover feed transportation costs caused by drought, which are now covered by the [Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-raised Fish Program \(ELAP\)](#). The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) updated the program this year to include feed transportation costs as well as lowered the threshold for when assistance for water hauling expenses is available.

The new [ELAP Feed Transportation Producer Tool](#) is a Microsoft Excel workbook that enables ranchers to input information specific to their operation to determine an estimated payment. Final payments may vary depending on eligibility.

To use the tool, ranchers will need:

- Number of truckloads for this year.
- Mileage per truckload this year.
- Share of feed cost this year (if splitting loads).
- Number of truckloads you normally haul.
- Normal mileage per truckload.
- Share of normal feed cost

The tool requires Microsoft Excel, and a [tutorial video](#) is available.

Updates to ELAP

ELAP provides financial assistance to eligible producers of livestock, honeybees and farm-raised fish for losses due to disease, certain adverse weather events or loss conditions as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture. ELAP now covers feed transportation costs where grazing and hay resources have been depleted. This includes places where: Drought intensity is D2 for eight consecutive weeks as indicated by the [U.S. Drought Monitor](#); or Drought intensity is D3 or greater.

The tool calculates the estimated payment for feed transportation assistance, but it is not an application. Once FSA begins accepting applications later this fall for feed transportation assistance, ranchers should contact their FSA county office to apply. To simplify the application process, ranchers can print or email payment estimates generated by this tool for submission to FSA. The deadline to apply for ELAP, including feed transportation costs, for 2021 is Jan. 31, 2022.

ELAP already covers above normal costs for hauling water to livestock in areas where drought intensity is D3 or greater on the drought monitor. FSA is also updating ELAP to also cover water hauling in areas experiencing D2 for eight consecutive weeks, lowering the threshold for this assistance to be available. Program benefits are retroactive for 2021.

Payment Calculations

USDA will reimburse eligible ranchers 60 percent of feed transportation costs above what would have been incurred in a normal year. Producers qualifying as underserved (socially disadvantaged, limited resource, beginning or military veteran) will be reimbursed for 90 percent of the feed transportation cost above what would have normally incurred in a year. USDA uses a national cost formula to determine reimbursement costs that will not include the first 25 miles and distances exceeding 1,000 transportation miles. The calculation will also exclude the normal cost to transport hay or feed if the producer normally purchases some feed. For 2021, the initial cost formula of \$6.60 per mile will be used (before the percentage is applied).

Eligibility

To be eligible for ELAP assistance, livestock must be intended for grazing and producers must have incurred feed transportation costs on or after Jan. 1, 2021. Although producers will self-certify losses and expenses to FSA, producers are encouraged to maintain good

records and retain receipts and related documentation in the event these documents are requested for review by the local FSA County Committee.

More Drought Recovery Information

USDA offers a comprehensive portfolio of disaster assistance programs. On farmers.gov, the [Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool](#), [Disaster Assistance-at-a-Glance fact sheet](#), and [Farm Loan Discovery Tool](#) can help producers and landowners determine all program or loan options available for disaster recovery assistance. For details, producers should contact their [local USDA Service Center](#).

Deadline to Apply for Natural Resource Conservation Funds Approaching

Farmers and ranchers interested in preventing erosion, improving soil health, conserving water and wildlife, or making any other natural resource conservation improvements to their property are encouraged to apply now for funding available from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Those interested in receiving funding should sign up before Nov. 19, 2021.

The most widely applied conservation programs in Nebraska are the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). The goal of these conservation programs is to provide a financial incentive to encourage landowners to install conservation practices that protect natural resources, resulting in cleaner air and water, healthy soil, and more wildlife habitat.

Individuals interested in applying for these conservation programs may do so at any time, but applications need to be submitted by Nov. 19 to be considered for this year's funding.

For more information about conservation programs and other assistance available, call [your local NRCS field office](#) or visit www.ne.nrcs.usda.gov.

October FSA Interest Rates

OPERATING/OWNERSHIP

Farm Operating: 1.750%

Microloan Operating: 1.750%

Farm Ownership: 2.875%

Farm Ownership - Joint Financing: 2.5%

Farm Ownership - Down Payment: 1.5%

Emergency - Actual Loss: 2.750%

FARM STORAGE

Farm Storage Facility Loan 3 year term: 0.375%

Farm Storage Facility Loan 5 year term: 0.750%

Farm Storage Facility Loan 7 year term: 1.125%

Farm Storage Facility Loan 10 year term: 1.375%

Farm Storage Facility Loan 12 year term: 1.5%

MARKETING ASSISTANCE

Commodity Loan: 1.125%

Dates to Remember

November 1, 2021 – FSA deadline for applications to the Organic Certification Cost Share Program

November 1, 2021 – Ballots mailed to eligible voters for the FSA County Committee election

November 11, 2021 – USDA Service Centers closed for federal holiday

November 15, 2021 – FSA acreage reporting deadline for fall-seeded crops for 2022 program eligibility

November 15, 2021 – ***FSA NAP application closing deadline for coverage for alfalfa, mixed forages and grass in the 2022 production season

November 19, 2021 – NRCS deadline to apply for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

November 25, 2021 – USDA Service Centers closed for federal holiday

December 6, 2021 – Deadline to return County Committee election ballots to USDA Service Center

****Please note the above NAP calendar references may not be inclusive for all NAP-covered crops; NAP participants should contact their County FSA Office to confirm important program deadlines.*



Nebraska FSA and NRCS State Office Information

Farm Service Agency

7131 A Street
Lincoln, NE 68510
Phone: (402) 437-5581
Fax: (844) 930-0237

Tim Divis, FSA
Acting State Executive Director
timothy.divis@usda.gov

Natural Resources Conservation Service

100 Centennial Mall North, Suite 152
Lincoln, NE 68508
Phone: (402) 437-5300

John Wilson, NRCS
Acting State Conservationist
john.wilson@usda.gov

FSA State Office Programs Chiefs

Cathy Anderson, *Production & Compliance*

Doug Klein, *Conservation & Price Support*

Mark Wilke, *Farm Loans*

Patty Wilke, *Administrative Officer*

FSA State Committee

Tim Divis, *Acting Committee*