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## Message from the State Executive Director

Hello Everyone,

I hope you all are enjoying your summer. As monsoon season moves in we are all getting a much welcomed break from the severe summer heat that we were experiencing earlier in the month. Although we are now getting some much-needed rain, drought will still be a major concern for many of our counties as we continue into the rest of the summer. To stay on top of what is going on in your neighborhood or throughout the state resources are available to those who would like to learn more about drought in their area. One of my favorite resources is [Ask the Expert: Understanding the U.S. Drought Monitor](#), a [Farmers.gov](#) article with climatologist Brian Fuchs that discusses the U.S. Drought Monitor, the USDA programs triggered by the Monitor data, and how the data can aid agricultural producers as they make decisions. I would encourage you to visit the site and give it a read and hopefully it can help you in planning for your farm or ranch activities for the remainder of the year.

Speaking of upcoming events, The nomination period for [FSA County Committee \(COC\) Elections](#) began on June 15 and runs until August 1. If you or a neighbor are interested in serving on your local County Committee, please reach out to [your local FSA Service Center](#) for more information. County Committees are an essential component of the day-to-day operations of FSA: the Committees make determinations on programs such as disaster

assistance, make certain hiring decisions, assist with outreach, and ensure fair and equitable administration of FSA programs in their counties.

On the note of disasters wildfire season is still among us, and fires are continuing to wreak havoc across the state. Please remember if you been affected by the recent fires document everything that has been damaged and visit the [Wildfire Recovery](#) page on [Farmers.Gov](#) or stop by your local USDA Service Center. New Mexico Farm Service Agency is part of your community, and we are here to assist you in your agricultural needs.

Lastly, the 2022 Census of Agriculture data collection begins in November. Agriculture producers who did not receive the 2017 Census of Agriculture and do not receive other USDA surveys or censuses have until June 30 to sign up at [nass.usda.gov/AgCensus](https://nass.usda.gov/AgCensus) to receive the 2022 Census of Agriculture. The Ag Census includes every American operation – large or small, urban or rural – from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products are produced and sold in the ag census year. A complete count, with every producer represented, is vital to ensure we get the assistance we need here in New Mexico and across the country.

Thank you all for what you do and have a festive 4<sup>th</sup> of July as we celebrate the independence of our great nation.

Sincerely,  
Jonas Moya

**IMPORTANT DATES**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Announcement</b>	<b>Date</b>
Emergency Livestock Assistance Program (ELAP)	Deadline to complete application for benefit on transportation of livestock to feed.	June 30
Compliance Acreage Reporting	All Other Crops, Perennial Forage, CRP, Potatoes (All counties except Curry, Lea, and Roosevelt)	July 15
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)	General - Deadline for NRCS/TSP to complete Conservation Plans, return completed to FSA	July 18
Compliance Acreage Reporting	Hemp	July 31
Compliance Acreage Reporting	Beans	August 15

Farm Records	Requesting Adjusted PLC Yield	August 1
Farm Records	Request Farm Record Transfer	August 1
Conservation Reserve Programs	Grasslands - Deadline for NRCS/TSP to complete Conservation Plans, return completed to FSA	September 9
Conservation Reserve Programs	General & Grasslands - Obtain all signatures, approve CRP-1s, load into COLS	September 30
Organic Certification Cost Share Program	Deadline to complete application with supporting documentation	October 31
Organic and Transitional Education and Certification Program	Deadline to complete application with supporting documentation	TBD

**OFFICE CLOSURES**

Independence Day	July 4
Labor Day	September 3
Columbus Day	October 8
Veterans Day	November 12
Thanksgiving Day	November 22
Christmas Day	December 25

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# Farmers.gov Feature Helps Producers Find Farm Loans that Fit Their Operation

Farmers and ranchers can use the *Farm Loan Discovery Tool* on farmers.gov to find information on USDA farm loans that may best fit their operations.

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers a variety of loan options to help farmers finance their operations. From buying land to financing the purchase of equipment, FSA loans can help.

USDA conducted field research in eight states, gathering input from farmers and FSA farm loan staff to better understand their needs and challenges.

## How the Tool Works

Farmers who are looking for financing options to operate a farm or buy land can answer a few simple questions about what they are looking to fund and how much money they need to borrow. After submitting their answers, farmers will receive information on farm loans that best fit their specific needs. The loan application and additional resources also will be provided.

Farmers can download application quick guides that outline what to expect from preparing an application to receiving a loan decision. There are four guides that cover loans to individuals, entities, and youth, as well as information on microloans. The guides include general eligibility requirements and a list of required forms and documentation for each type of loan. These guides can help farmers prepare before their first USDA service center visit with a loan officer.

Farmers can access the *Farm Loan Discovery Tool* by visiting [farmers.gov/fund](https://farmers.gov/fund) and clicking the "Start" button. Follow the prompts and answer five simple questions to receive loan information that is applicable to your agricultural operation. The tool is built to run on any modern browser like Chrome, Edge, Firefox, or the Safari browser, and is fully functional on mobile devices. It does not work in Internet Explorer.

## About Farmers.gov

In 2018, USDA unveiled farmers.gov, a dynamic, mobile-friendly public website combined with an authenticated portal where farmers will be able to apply for programs, process transactions, and manage accounts.

The *Farm Loan Discovery Tool* is one of many resources on farmers.gov to help connect farmers to information that can help their operations. Earlier this year, USDA launched the *My Financial Information* feature, which enables farmers to view their loan information, history, payments, and alerts by logging into the website.

USDA is building farmers.gov for farmers, by farmers. In addition to the interactive farm loan features, the site also offers a Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool. Farmers can visit [farmers.gov/recover/disaster-assistance-tool#step-1](https://farmers.gov/recover/disaster-assistance-tool#step-1) to find disaster assistance programs that can help their operation recover from natural disasters.

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## Progression Lending from FSA

Farm Service Agency (FSA) farm loans are considered progression lending. Unlike loans from a commercial lender, FSA loans are intended to be temporary in nature. Our goal is to help you graduate to commercial credit, and our farm loan staff is available to help borrowers through training and credit counseling.

The FSA team will help borrowers identify their goals to ensure financial success. FSA staff will advise borrowers on developing strategies and a plan to meet your goals and graduate to commercial credit. FSA borrowers are responsible for the success of their farming operation, but FSA staff will help in an advisory role, providing the tools necessary to help you achieve your operational goals and manage your finances.

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## USDA Accepting Applications to Help Cover Costs of Organic, Transitioning Producers

Agricultural producers and handlers who are certified organic, along with producers and handlers who are transitioning to organic production, can now apply for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) [Organic and Transitional Education Certification Program](#) (OTECP) and [Organic Certification Cost Share Program](#) (OCCSP), which help producers and handlers cover the cost of organic certification, along with other related expenses. Applications for OTECP and OCCSP are both due October 31, 2022.

OTECP covers:

- Certification costs for organic producers and handlers (25% up to \$250 per category).
- Eligible expenses for transitional producers, including fees for pre-certification inspections and development of an organic system plan (75% up to \$750).
- Registration fees for educational events (75% up to \$200).
- Soil testing (75% up to \$100).

Meanwhile, OCCSP covers 50% or up to \$500 per category of certification costs in 2022.

This cost share for certification is available for each of these categories: crops, wild crops, livestock, processing/handling and State organic program fees.

Producers can receive cost share through both OTECP and OCCSP. Both OTECP and OCCSP cover costs incurred from October 1, 2021, to September 30, 2022. Producers have until October 31, 2022 to file applications, and FSA will make payments as applications are received.

To apply, producers and handlers should contact the Farm Service Agency (FSA) at their local USDA Service Center. As part of completing the OCCSP applications, 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 participating State agencies.

Additional details can be found on the [OTECP](#) and [OCCSP](#) webpages.

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## **USDA Fruit, Vegetable and Wild Rice Planting Rules Unchanged in 2018 Farm Bill**

Fruit, vegetable and wild rice producers will continue to follow the same rules for certain Farm Service Agency (FSA) programs.

If you intend to participate in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs, you are subject to an acre-for-acre payment reduction when fruits and nuts, vegetables or wild rice are planted on payment acres of a farm. Payment reductions do not apply to mung beans, dry peas, lentils or chickpeas. Planting fruits, vegetables or wild rice on acres not considered payment acres will not result in a payment reduction. Farms that are eligible to participate in ARC/PLC but are not enrolled for a particular year may plant unlimited fruits, vegetables and wild rice for that year but will not receive ARC/PLC payments. Eligibility for succeeding years is not affected.

Planting and harvesting fruits, vegetables and wild rice on ARC/PLC acreage is subject to the acre-for-acre payment reduction when those crops are planted on more than 15 percent of the base acres of an ARC enrolled farm using the county coverage or PLC, or more than 35 percent of the base acres of an ARC enrolled farm using the individual coverage.

Fruits, vegetables and wild rice that are planted in a double-cropping practice will not cause a payment reduction if the farm is in a double-cropping region as designated by the USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation.

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## **Filing CCC-941 Adjusted Gross Income Certifications**

If you have experienced delays in receiving Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) payments, Loan Deficiency Payments (LDPs) and Market Gains on Marketing Assistance Loans (MALs), it may be because you have not filed form CCC-941, *Adjusted Gross Income Certification*.

If you don't have a valid CCC-941 on file for the applicable crop year you will not receive payments. All farm operator/tenants/owners who have not filed a CCC-941 and have pending payments should IMMEDIATELY file the form with their recording county FSA office. Farm operators and tenants are encouraged to ensure that their landowners have filed the form.

FSA can accept the CCC-941 for 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022. Unlike the past, you must have the CCC-941 certifying your AGI compliance before any payments can be issued.

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## **FSA Offers Drought Assistance for Livestock Producers Through Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees and Farm-raised Fish Program (ELAP)**

If you've suffered above normal expenses for hauling feed or water to livestock or hauling livestock to forage/grazing acres due to the impacts of drought, you may be eligible for financial assistance through the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP).

For eligible producers in qualifying counties, ELAP provides financial assistance for:

- the transportation of water to livestock;
- the above normal cost of mileage for transporting feed to livestock,
- the above normal cost of transporting livestock to forage/grazing acres.\*

*\*Hauling livestock one-way, one haul per animal reimbursement and no payment for "empty miles."*

Eligible livestock include cattle, buffalo, goats and sheep, among others, that are maintained for commercial use and located in a county where the qualifying drought conditions occur. A county must have had D2 severe drought intensity on the U.S. Drought Monitor for eight consecutive weeks during the normal grazing period, or D3 or D4 drought intensity at any time during the normal grazing period. Producers must have risk in both eligible livestock and eligible grazing land in an eligible county to qualify for ELAP assistance.

### **WATER TRANSPORTATION**

For ELAP water transportation assistance, a producer must be transporting water to eligible livestock on eligible grazing land where the producer had adequate livestock watering systems or facilities in place before the drought occurred and where they do not normally require the transportation of water. Payments are for costs associated with personal labor, equipment, hired labor, equipment, and/or contracted water transportation fees. Cost of the water itself is not covered. The ELAP payment formula uses a national average price per gallon.

### **ABOVE NORMAL COSTS OF TRANSPORTING FEED**

ELAP provides financial assistance to livestock producers who incur above normal expenses for transporting feed to livestock during drought. The payment formula excludes the first 25 miles and any mileage over 1,000 miles. The reimbursement rate is 60% of the costs above what would normally have been incurred during the same time period in a normal (non-

drought) year. **ABOVE NORMAL COSTS OF TRANSPORTING LIVESTOCK TO FORAGE/GRAZING ACRES**

ELAP provides financial assistance to livestock producers who are hauling livestock to a new location for feed resources due to insufficient feed and/or grazing in drought-impacted areas. Assistance for Livestock transportation is retroactive to 2021 and available for 2022 and subsequent years. **For those interested in this provision for 2021, the deadline to apply for assistance is June 30, 2022. Please contact your county FSA office for additional details.**

For calendar year 2022 forward, producers must submit a notice of loss to your local FSA office **within 30 calendar days** of when the loss is apparent; producers should contact their county FSA office as soon as the loss of water resources or feed resources are known. For ELAP eligibility, documentation of expenses is critical. Producers should maintain records and receipts associated with the costs of transporting water to eligible livestock, the costs of transporting feed to eligible livestock, and the costs of transporting eligible livestock to forage/grazing acres.

ELAP also offers assistance to producers impacted by wildfire. Contact your county FSA office for more information on ELAP resources for wildfire losses. In addition, beekeepers also can benefit from ELAP provisions and should contact their county FSA office within 15 calendar days of when a loss occurs or from when the loss is apparent.

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