



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

## Oregon FSA Newsletter - June 2022

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## State Executive Director's Message

It's hard to believe I've just completed my first two months since being sworn in as Oregon's State Executive Director. As a customer service agency outreach is critical to our success. Outreach with stakeholders, whether it be one-on-one meetings or in large group settings, provides our



customers with information, access, and a touchpoint that defines The People's Department.

That outreach must also include our amazing employees, without whom, we couldn't provide service to our producers across the state. I've had the honor of visiting with four, soon to be five, county offices in person and many more by virtual meetings. My goal is to visit all of the Oregon FSA county offices this calendar year and I look forward to meeting with producers and county committee members.

On **June 1**, [USDA announced the Food System Transformation](#), which will benefit consumers, producers and rural communities by providing more options, increasing access, and creating new, more, and better markets for small and mid-size producers. The goals include:

- Building a more resilient food supply chain that provides more and better market options for consumers and producers while reducing carbon pollution;
- Creating a fairer food system that combats market dominance and helps producers and consumers gain more power in the marketplace by creating new, more and better local market options;
- Making nutritious food more accessible and affordable for consumers; and
- Emphasizing equity.

On **June 9**, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Oregon announced the [Portland's People's Garden](#) location at [Our Village Gardens](#), Seeds of Harmony community garden. The article below provides more information on our opportunity to work with local community gardens once again.

**County Committee Elections:** If your county will be holding County Committee elections this year, the nomination period began **June 15** and runs through **August 1**. Please see the [County Committee website](#) and the recent GovDelivery news release and bulletin articles for more information.

As we honor **Juneteenth** and **USDA's Bounty of PRIDE** in June, it is an important month for USDA and our country. We celebrate our employees, producers, farmers, and ranchers, and have a month full of opportunities for our employees at USDA to gather, learn and reflect. A success story article is available on the NRCS Oregon's website at [A Bounty of Pride at The Side Yard Farm | NRCS Oregon \(usda.gov\)](#).

At USDA, we are committed to reaching new heights by recruiting, onboarding, supporting, and retaining a diverse and talented workforce and cultivating a workplace environment that is collaborative, service-oriented, mission-centered, healthy, inclusive, and welcoming.

We believe this focus on organizational culture will enable us to build the USDA back better as a premier organization and model employer that lives by its values. Additionally, USDA is focused on continuously finding ways to attract talent that represents the diversity of America.

Gail Greenman, State Executive Director  
Oregon FSA



Josh Hanning, FSA District Director presenting at the June Oregon Cattelman's Association Mid-Year Conference, Grant County. Photo by Darcy Sexson.

## Interest Rates - June 2022

**Farm Operating Loans – Direct, 3.625%**  
**Farm Operating – Microloans, 3.625%**  
**Farm Ownership Loans – Direct, 3.750%**  
**Farm Ownership – Microloan, 3.750%**  
**Farm Ownership-Direct, Joint Financing, 2.500%**  
**Farm Ownership-Down Payment, 1.500%**  
**Emergency Loans Actual Loss, 3.750%**  
**Farm Storage Facility Loans - 3 Years, 2.875%**  
**Farm Storage Facility Loans - 5 Years, 2.875%**  
**Farm Storage Facility Loans - 7 Years, 3.000%**  
**Farm Storage Facility Loans - 10 Years, 2.875%**

See [Oregon FSA's website/News Releases](#) for information on USDA's Secretarial natural disaster designations to extend much-needed emergency credit to producers recovering from natural disasters through [emergency loans](#).

FSA also offers guaranteed loans through commercial lenders at rates set by those lenders. You can find out which of these loans may be right for you by using our [Farm Loan Discovery Tool](#).

## Important Dates

- **June 15, 2022:** [County Committee Nomination Period Begins](#)
- **June 20, 2022:** Offices Closed for Juneteenth, Federal Holiday.
- **June 30, 2022:** 2021 ELAP Assistance Deadline (see article below).
- **June 30, 2022:** Census of Ag Sign-up Period Ends.

- **July 4, 2022:** Offices Closed for Independence Day, Federal Holiday.
- **July 15, 2022:** Acreage Reporting Deadline for Perennial Forage, spring planted crops.
- **July 22, 2022:** ERP Applications Due.
- **August 5, 2022:** CRP-CLEAR30 Signups end.
- **October 31, 2022:** Organic and Transitional Education and Certification Program (OTECP) and Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP) applications due.

[Click here to learn more about local deadlines and ongoing programs.](#)  
[Click here to find state outreach events and trainings.](#)

## **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 [local FSA County 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.

For more information regarding ELAP, contact your [local FSA County Office](#) or visit [fsa.usda.gov/disaster](https://fsa.usda.gov/disaster).

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## **2022 Census of Agriculture**

**June 30, 2022 is the last day to sign up** for the 2022 Ag Census. If you have never received a census and are new to the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) surveys, [sign up to be counted](#) today. You do not need to sign up if you already receive NASS surveys.

**Key Dates:** June 30, 2022 – sign up ends; November 2022 – census mails out; February 2023 – response deadline; Spring/summer 2024 – data release. For further information please visit the [NASS Census webpage](#).



# Top 6 Emergency Relief Program Checklist Items for Eligible Farmers

FSA recently began mailing 303,000 pre-filled applications for the Emergency Relief Program (ERP), a new program designed to help agricultural producers impacted by wildfires, droughts, hurricanes, winter storms, and other qualifying natural disasters experienced during calendar years 2020 and 2021.



The past few years have been tough to say the least. As producers have dealt with the continued impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, they have also struggled to recover from more frequent, more intense natural disasters. I am grateful that Congress passed, and President Biden signed into law the *Extending Government Funding and Delivering Emergency Assistance Act* (P.L. 117-43), which includes \$10 billion in critical emergency relief.

After extensive stakeholder outreach, including with producers and groups that have not always been included in USDA programs, our team began work developing a responsive, easier-to-access program that could be rolled out in phases. We're now rolling out the first phase of ERP, which uses existing [Federal Crop Insurance](#) or [Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program](#) (NAP) data as the basis for calculating initial payments.

By leveraging existing data, we will be able to deliver approximately \$6 billion in assistance on a faster timeline; at the same time, my team and I are committed to ensuring that producers who do not have existing data on file with USDA are captured in the second phase of ERP, which will be explicitly focused on filling gaps in previously implemented emergency assistance.

## To apply for ERP Phase 1, here's what you need to do:

### 1. Check Your Mailbox

The form being mailed to you includes eligibility requirements, outlines the application process, and provides estimated ERP payment calculations. Producers will receive a separate application form for each program year in which an eligible loss occurred. Receipt of a pre-filled application is not confirmation that a producer is eligible to receive an ERP phase one payment. This application takes about 0.176 hours (that's less than 15 minutes) for producers to complete, compared to the former Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program – Plus application which took several hours for producers to complete and even longer for FSA staff.

**The deadline to return completed ERP applications to FSA is Friday, July 22, 2022. If you have NAP coverage, you will receive pre-filled ERP applications later this summer. Details on ERP Phase 2 will be forthcoming as well.**

### 2. Check Your Eligibility

ERP covers losses to crops, trees, bushes, and vines due to a qualifying natural disaster event in calendar years 2020 and 2021. Eligible crops include all crops for which crop insurance or NAP coverage was available, except for crops intended for grazing. Qualifying natural disaster events include wildfires, hurricanes, floods, derechos, excessive heat, winter storms, freeze (including a polar vortex), smoke exposure, excessive moisture, qualifying drought\*, and related conditions.

\*Lists of [2020](#) and [2021](#) drought counties eligible for ERP are available online.

### 3. Check Required Forms on File with FSA

#### Producers must have the following forms on file with FSA:

- Form AD-2047, *Customer Data Worksheet*.
- Form CCC-902, *Farm Operating Plan* for an individual or legal entity.
- Form CCC-901, *Member Information for Legal Entities*(if applicable).
- Form FSA-510, *Request for an Exception to the \$125,000 Payment Limitation for Certain Programs*(if applicable).
- A highly erodible land conservation (sometimes referred to as HELC) and wetland conservation certification (Form AD-1026 *Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELC) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification*) for the ERP producer and applicable affiliates.

*If you have previously participated in FSA programs, you will likely have these required forms on file. However, if you're uncertain or want to confirm the status of your forms, contact your [local FSA county office](#).*

### 4. Check Historically Underserved Status with FSA, If Applicable

The ERP payment percentage for historically underserved producers, including beginning, limited resource, socially disadvantaged, and veteran farmers, and ranchers will be increased by 15% of the calculated ERP payment.

To qualify for the higher payment percentage, eligible producers must have the following form on file with FSA:

- Form CCC-860, *Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, Beginning and Veteran Farmer or Rancher Certification*.

### 5. Check Your Future Insurance Coverage

All producers who receive ERP phase one payments are statutorily required to purchase crop insurance, or NAP coverage where crop insurance is not available, for the next two available crop years, as determined by the Secretary.

Coverage requirements will be determined from the date a producer receives an ERP payment and may vary depending on the timing and availability of crop insurance or NAP for a producer's particular crops. The final crop year to purchase crop insurance or NAP coverage to meet the second year of coverage for this requirement is the 2026 crop year.

### 6. Check Your bank

Once the completed ERP application for payment is submitted to and signed by FSA, producers who have direct deposit should look for payment within three business days.

#### More Information

We have additional resources, including:

- [ERP May 16, 2022 New Release](#)
- [ERP Fact Sheet](#)
- [Answers to Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#)
- [Emergency Relief Webpage](#)

- [ERP Notice of Funding Availability](#)

In addition to ERP, FSA is also implementing the first phase of the new Emergency Livestock Relief Program. At this time, FSA has made more than \$588 million in payments to impacted livestock producers.

Bottom line, we take your feedback seriously, and we wanted to deliver this relief as soon as possible. We learned from previous relief programs, and we're excited to be getting this to you as swiftly as we can.

## NRCS Oregon announces Portland's People's Garden, Our Village Gardens

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Oregon announced Portland's People's Garden location at [Our Village Gardens](#), Seeds of Harmony Community garden. (Photo right: Lee Melaugh, Community Engagement Coordinator; Eca-Etabo Wasongolo, Community Organizer, and Kris Soebroto, Garden Director.)



*Our Village Gardens*, located in North Portland, builds food resilience and community leadership alongside residents, communities of color and refugee and immigrant families impacted by economic and food inequity. *Our Village Gardens* has three properties in North Portland: The Seeds of Harmony community garden, the Fruits of Diversity community orchard and The Village Market grocery store.

USDA People's Gardens are models of what local gardens can do to build community, grow local and nutritious food, nurture greenspace, and inspire people through the experience of growing from seed to plant. People's Gardens benefit and educate the community, incorporate sustainable practices and are collaborative in nature.

"We're excited to announce *Our Village Gardens* as Portland's People's Garden," said Ron Alvarado, NRCS Oregon's State Conservationist. "The People's Garden Initiative is focused on creating strong, resilient food systems for local communities and *Our Village Gardens* embodies this commitment."

### ***Our Village Gardens***

*Our Village Gardens* currently operates programs in the New Columbia and Tamarack apartments, a low- and mixed-income housing neighborhood of over 100 acres in North Portland. This neighborhood is home to a vibrant community with deep roots in the area, as well as a growing number of families arriving as immigrants and refugees. The area also has some of the county's highest poverty rates and limited access to fresh, healthy, and affordable food.

"We are so excited to be chosen as Portland's People's Garden," says Kris Soebroto, *Our Village Gardens*' Director. "Our community leaders built this garden from the ground up, and 12 years later, it continues to feed and nourish our neighbors."

For further information please [click here to access the NRCS article](#).

## FSA Offers Joint Financing Option on Direct Farm Ownership Loans

The USDA Farm Service Agency's (FSA) [Direct Farm Ownership loans](#) can help farmers and ranchers become owner-operators of family farms, improve and expand current operations, increase agricultural productivity, and assist with land tenure to save farmland for future generations.



There are three types of Direct Farm Ownership Loans: regular, down payment and joint financing. FSA also offers a [Direct Farm Ownership Microloan](#) option for smaller financial needs up to \$50,000.

Joint financing allows FSA to provide more farmers and ranchers with access to capital. FSA lends up to 50 percent of the total amount financed. A commercial lender, a State program or the seller of the property being purchased, provides the balance of loan funds, with or without an FSA guarantee. The maximum loan amount for a joint financing loan is \$600,000, and the repayment period for the loan is up to 40 years.

The operation must be an eligible farm enterprise. Farm Ownership loan funds cannot be used to finance nonfarm enterprises and all applicants must be able to meet general eligibility requirements. Loan applicants are also required to have participated in the business operations of a farm or ranch for at least three years out of the 10 years prior to the date the application is submitted. The applicant must show documentation that their participation in the business operation of the farm or ranch was not solely as a laborer.

For more information about farm loans visit [fsa.usda.gov](https://fsa.usda.gov) or contact your local [USDA Service Center](#).

## Cash Rents and Leases Annual Survey

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) and other USDA agencies rely on average cash rental rates in each county to help develop and administer federal farm programs. To collect this information, USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) asks farmers and ranchers for information for the Cash Rents and Leases survey each year.



NASS will collect cash rent data through July 2022 and the state-level survey results will be released on August 5, and county-level results August 26, 2022, at [quickstats.nass.usda.gov](https://quickstats.nass.usda.gov).

For additional information about this survey please visit: [nass.usda.gov/Surveys/Guide to NASS Surveys/Cash Rents by County/index.php](https://nass.usda.gov/Surveys/Guide_to_NASS_Surveys/Cash_Rents_by_County/index.php).

## NASS's New Conservation Survey is Here!

NASS has mailed the [Conservation Practice Adoption Motivations Survey](#) out to farmers and producers. This survey is a joint project between the National Agricultural Statistics



Service (NASS) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) aimed at assessing the adoption rates of different conservation practices. Survey data – which will be collected through August 19 – will be used to guide the implementation of NRCS programs in the future. Look out for data from the survey September 15. Each letter to landowners includes a unique survey code. If a landowner lost their survey code, they can call the national help line at 1-888 424-7828. Submitted by Lauren Bennett, NRCS Public Affairs Officer, Portland.

## Photos needed for the 2023 USDA in Oregon Calendar!

We need your great agriculture photos once again for the 2023 USDA in Oregon calendar! [Please see the attached flyer for further information](#) or stop by or call your local [USDA Service Center](#).

USDA in Oregon calendars provide how to sign up for USDA's GovDelivery service for electronic newsletters and/or text messages, [Farmers.gov](#) resources, program and deadline reminders, and great photos from Oregon producers and FSA staff.



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**Oregon FSA State Committee:**  
Katherine Minthorn, STC Member  
**STC Meeting: TBD**

How can we help you? Submit questions or requests for further information to [ASK.USDA.GOV](https://www.asks.usda.gov) or 1-833-ONE-USDA

Sign up for important text message alerts from your local county FSA office! To subscribe, text FSANOW (372-669).



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