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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Oregon FSA Newsletter - May 2023

[Farm Service Agency](#) | [Natural Resources Conservation Service](#) | [Risk Management Agency](#)

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A Message from the State Executive Director

Happy Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Heritage Month! Happy Jewish American Heritage Month! Happy Mental Health Awareness Month! All of these recognitions are important to so many FSA employees and our customers! While all heritages and mental health should be recognized and practiced year-round, these months provide an intentional time where we can reflect, honor and learn more. At USDA Secretary Vilsack gives USDA employees endless opportunities through trainings, webinars, in person events and more about our heritage, other cultures and certainly wellness.

I would also be remiss if I didn't mention the week of May 8 is Public Service Recognition Week. I am so lucky to work for 100 amazing people at Oregon FSA each and every day. Their guidance, wisdom, friendship and grace they have shown and given me during my first year is something I will always treasure. I tell them often how much I appreciate them. I also want our customers to know they have an amazing team working tirelessly, from Multnomah to Malheur counties and everywhere in between. Please join me in saying thank you!

Finally, in January, we announced two new programs designed to assist producers who experienced revenue losses from 2020 and 2021 natural disasters or the COVID-19 pandemic. These programs are revenue-based and feel a little different from our regular programs, but the goal is to better support farmers. Both the [Emergency Relief Program \(ERP\) Phase Two](#) and the [Pandemic Assistance Revenue Program \(PARP\)](#) offer a holistic approach to disaster assistance and provide economic support for producers who bear the financial brunt of circumstances beyond their control.

With the rollout of any new program, there is a learning curve for producers and employees alike. ERP Phase Two and PARP are no exception. With a **June 2, 2023, deadline to apply for both programs**, it's important that we clear up confusion about how to apply, what documents are required for participation, insurance requirements, and related misinformation making its way across the countryside. To encourage producer participation in these valuable programs, we at FSA have done some myth busting. Check them out [online!](#)

Gail Greenman
Oregon FSA State Executive Director



Join us for the People's Garden anniversary! Sign up your garden in Portland, Oregon.



Gardens are invited to join the 1,250 strong People's Garden community!

The People's Garden community is growing! Last May, USDA renewed the People's Garden initiative. On the anniversary of the reopening we invite you to join approximately 1,200 People's Gardens that have signed up nationwide in the past year by registering on [the USDA People's Garden website](#). Community gardens, urban farms, school gardens, and small-scale agriculture projects in rural, suburban and urban areas can join the "People's Garden" community.

We invite you to:

- **Join** the People's Garden community.
- **Grow** using sustainable practices that benefit people and wildlife.
- **Teach** about local, resilient food systems.
- **Map** - People's Gardens are marked on a map on the USDA website and may be featured in USDA communications. You'll receive a People's Garden sign to display and learn about People's Garden community information such as webinars.

Sign up at www.usda.gov/peoples-garden.

Interest Rates - May 2023

- Farm Operating Loans – Direct, 5.000%**
- Farm Operating – Microloans, 5.000%**
- Farm Ownership Loans – Direct, 5.000%**
- Farm Ownership – Microloan, 5.000%**
- Farm Ownership-Direct, Joint Financing, 3.000%**
- Farm Ownership-Down Payment, 1.500%**
- Emergency Loans Actual Loss, 3.750%**
- Farm Storage Facility Loans - 3 Years, 3.750%**
- Farm Storage Facility Loans - 5 Years, 3.500%**
- Farm Storage Facility Loans - 7 Years, 3.500%**
- Farm Storage Facility Loans - 10 Years, 3.500%**

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 2, 2023:** Emergency Relief Program (ERP) Phase 2 and Pandemic Assistance Revenue Program (PARP) signups close.
- **June 19, 2023:** Juneteenth Federal Holiday, Offices Closed.
- **July 4, 2023:** Fourth of July Holiday, Offices Closed.
- **July 18, 2023:** [NRCS Beginning Farmer & Rancher Webinar](#), Noon-2pm (PT).
- **July 31, 2023:** [USDA CLEAR30](#) sign-up ends.
- **September 30, 2023:** [RMA Margin Protection Insurance Plan](#) sales closing date.
- **January 31, 2024:** [Food Safety Certification for Specialty Crops Program](#) deadline.

- **NAP** (Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program): Report losses within 15 days of event. Notify FSA of event within 72 hours for hand-harvested crops.

[Click here to learn more about local deadlines and ongoing programs.](#)

Don't Miss Your Opportunity to be Represented in Ag Census Data

Time is running out to respond to the 2022 Census of Agriculture! Thank you to the producers who have already completed the ag census. If you have not responded, there is still time. **By federal law, the ag census questionnaire needs to be completed by everyone who received it, including landowners who lease land to producers, those involved in conservation programs, even those who may have received the ag census and did not farm in 2022.**



Strong response means strong data; these data will inform decisions that will help shape the future of American agriculture for the next five or six years. By not responding, you risk being unrepresented and therefore underserved in farm programs and funding, crop insurance rates, rural development, disaster assistance, and more. Return your ag census by mail or fill it out online at agcounts.usda.gov. Learn more at nass.usda.gov/AgCensus and respond today. Learn more at nass.usda.gov/AgCensus and respond today.

USDA Kicks-Off Effort to Expand Market Opportunities for Climate-Smart Commodities and Learn from Pilot Projects

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced the official kick-off of the implementation phase for projects funded through the \$3.1 billion Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities effort. Project partners are beginning work on formal implementation of the climate-smart production practices, marketing, and quantification, monitoring, reporting and verification of greenhouse gas benefits that are funded through the effort as agreements are finalized on a rolling basis. As projects get underway, today USDA is launching the Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities Learning Network (Partnerships Network), a collaboration of all the project partners, which will generate key lessons-learned as projects are implemented. [Learn More](#)



USDA Simplifies Application Process for Noninsured Crops for Underserved Producers; Improves Risk Management Accessibility

A message from FSA Administrator Zach Ducheneaux:

Earlier this year, we made several updates to disaster assistance programs to give more farmers, ranchers, and Tribes equitable access to recovery programs administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA).



Specifically, I'd like to point out changes made to the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and how we've simplified the application process for underserved producers.

This important policy change opens the door to risk management options for producers who may not have previously known about or been able to obtain coverage to protect their crops.

NAP provides financial assistance to producers of noninsurable crops when natural disaster events cause low yields, loss of inventory, or prevented planting.

Our policy improvements mean that, beginning with the 2022 crop year, having a CCC-860 form, *Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, Beginning and Veteran Farmer or Rancher Certification*, on file with FSA will provide producers with basic NAP coverage for all eligible crops. Specifically, FSA is waiving all NAP-related service fees for basic coverage for producers with a CCC-860 on file prior to the application closing date for each crop. These producers are also eligible to receive a 50% premium reduction if they elect higher levels of coverage before the application closing date for each crop.

At the end of January, we notified producers who already have the CCC-860 certification form on file regarding their eligibility for NAP basic coverage for 2022. If you suffered losses from natural disasters in 2022, you will need to contact your local FSA county office to file an acreage report, as well as a notice of loss, and an application for a NAP payment.

If you are interested in NAP coverage for 2023 and future years, your local FSA county office staff will be more than happy to provide information on eligibility, coverage options, and how to apply for additional coverage.

While these recent policy changes are intended to remove barriers to available benefits and help underserved producers manage risk, any producer of noninsurable crops can apply for NAP coverage by completing FSA form [CCC-471](#), Application for Coverage, and paying a service fee. Your local FSA office can verify application closing dates and ensure coverage for your crops is available.

My staff and I are committed to revisiting FSA program policies and finding ways, within our authorities, to remove obstacles that prevent participation. Expanding NAP to ensure all producers of noninsured crops have access to risk coverage is the result of proactive input from producers and the willingness of FSA employees to think outside of the box for the benefit of the producers we serve.

Please contact your local [USDA Service Center](#) for more information on NAP coverage options.

USDA Supports Military Veteran's Transition to Farming

Are you a military veteran interested in farming? USDA offers resources to help you:



- **Fund Your Operation:** USDA's Farm Service Agency offers a variety of [funding opportunities](#) to help agricultural producers finance their businesses. Certain funds are targeted for veterans and beginning farmers and ranchers.
- **Conserve Natural Resources:** USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service offers [conservation programs and expert one-on-one technical assistance](#) to strengthen agricultural operations now and into the future. Veterans may be eligible for a cost share of up to 90 percent and advance payments of up to 50 percent to cover certain conservation practices.
- **Manage Risks:** USDA is here to help you prepare for and recover from the unexpected. Veterans who are beginning farmers may be eligible for reduced premiums, application fee waivers, increased insurance coverage, and other incentives for multiple [USDA programs that support risk management](#).

USDA wants to ensure that veterans transitioning to agriculture have the resources needed to succeed. To conduct business, please contact your local USDA Service Center. If you're a new farmer, you can also reach out to your [state Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coordinator](#).

For more information contact, contact your contact your local [USDA Service Center](#) or visit fsa.usda.gov.

NRCS Announces \$75 Million to Assist Producers Transitioning to Organic Production

The USDA announced details about its \$75 million investment in conservation assistance for producers transitioning to organic production. As part of the multi-agency [Organic Transition Initiative \(OTI\)](#), USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service will dedicate financial and technical assistance to a new organic management standard and partner with new organic technical experts to increase staff capacity and expertise.

Read more for details about assistance for producers transitioning to organic and the notice of funding to hire organic technical experts. [READ MORE](#)

More Information

For more information, visit farmers.gov/organic.



Share Your #Plant2023 Season!

It's that time of year again, and we want to showcase your planting season on social media and blogs. To participate, just send us a photo and a bit of information.

Learn more at <https://www.farmers.gov/blog/share-your-plant-2023-stories>.



Photos Needed for the USDA in Oregon 2024 Calendar

We need your photos for the 2024 USDA in Oregon calendar! If you would like to submit a photo for possible use in our 2024 USDA in Oregon calendar, please submit it by e-mail to EmmaLee.Demianew@usda.gov by September 30.

[See the flyer on the Oregon FSA webpage also!](#)

The 2023 USDA in OREGON calendars are still available! Stop by your local [USDA Service Center](#) to pick up your copy!



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**How can we help you? Submit
questions or requests for further
information to ASK.USDA.GOV
or 1-833-ONE-USDA.**

Next STC Meeting:
June 21-22

You can sign up for Urban Ag email alerts by visiting farmers.gov/subscribe (select "ORUrbanAG-Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production") or text alerts by texting USDAFSARMERS_4113.

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



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