USDA Farm Service Agency
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Utah Farm Service Agency Newsletter - November 15, 2022

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USDA Previews Crop and Revenue Loss Assistance for Agricultural Producers

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced plans for additional emergency relief and pandemic assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). USDA is preparing to roll out the Emergency Relief Program (ERP) Phase Two as well as the new Pandemic Assistance Revenue Program (PARP), which are two programs to help offset crop and revenue losses for producers. USDA is sharing early information to help producers gather documents and train front-line staff on the new approach.

ERP Phase Two will assist eligible agricultural producers who suffered eligible crop losses, measured through decreases in revenue, due to wildfires, hurricanes, floods, derechos, excessive heat, winter storms, freeze (including a polar vortex), smoke exposure, excessive moisture and qualifying droughts occurring in calendar years 2020 and 2021.

PARP will assist eligible producers of agricultural commodities who experienced revenue decreases in calendar year 2020 compared to 2018 or 2019 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. PARP will help address gaps in previous pandemic assistance, which was targeted at price loss or lack of market access, rather than overall revenue losses.

Emergency Relief Program Phase Two

ERP is authorized under the *Extending Government Funding and Delivering Emergency Assistance Act*, which includes $10 billion in assistance to agricultural producers impacted by wildfires, droughts, hurricanes, winter storms and other eligible disasters experienced during calendar years 2020 and 2021.

Phase Two builds on ERP Phase One, which was rolled out in May 2022 and has since paid more than $7.1 billion to producers who incurred eligible crop losses that were covered by federal crop insurance or Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program.

ERP Phase Two includes producers who suffered eligible losses but may not have received program benefits in Phase One. To be eligible for Phase Two, producers must have suffered a loss in allowable gross revenue as defined in forthcoming program regulations in 2020 or 2021 due to necessary expenses related to losses of eligible crops from a qualifying natural disaster event.

Eligible crops include both traditional insurable commodities and specialty crops that are produced in the United States as part of a farming operation and are intended to be commercially marketed. Like other emergency relief and pandemic assistance programs, USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) continues to look for ways to simplify the process for both staff and producers while reducing the paperwork burden. The design of ERP Phase Two is part of that effort.

In general, ERP Phase Two payments are expected to be based on the difference in certain farm revenue between a typical year of revenue as will be specified in program regulations for the producer and the disaster year. ERP Phase Two assistance is targeted to the remaining needs of producers impacted by qualifying natural disaster events, while avoiding windfalls or duplicative payments. Details will be available when the rule is published later this year.

Deadline for Emergency Relief Program Phase One

Producers who are eligible for assistance through ERP Phase One have until Friday, Dec. 16, 2022, to contact FSA at their local USDA Service Center to receive program benefits. Going forward, if any additional ERP Phase One prefilled applications are generated due to corrections or other circumstances, there will be a 30-day deadline from the date of notification for that particular application.

Pandemic Assistance Revenue Program

PARP is authorized and funded by the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021.

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 certain threshold decrease in allowable gross revenue for the 2020 calendar year, as compared to 2018 or 2019. Exact details on the calculations and eligibility will be available when the forthcoming rule is published.

How Producers Can Prepare

ERP Phase Two and PARP will use 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, as explained further below. Producers will need similar documentation to what was needed for the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) Phase Two, where a producer could use 2018 or 2019 as the benchmark year relative to the disaster year.

In the coming weeks, USDA will provide additional information on how to apply for assistance through ERP Phase Two and PARP. In the meantime, producers are encouraged to begin gathering supporting documentation including:

- Schedule F (Form 1040); and
- *Profit or Loss from Farming* or similar tax documents for tax years 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022 for ERP and for calendar years 2018, 2019 and 2020 for PARP.

Producers should also have, or be prepared to have, the following forms on file for both ERP and PARP program participation:

- 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 USDA Service Center.

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.

Through proactive communications and outreach, USDA will keep producers and stakeholders informed as program eligibility, application and implementation details unfold.

USDA Releases Nationwide Farmer, Rancher and Forest Manager Prospective Customer Survey

Are you a farmer, rancher or forest manager? Please share your vital feedback with USDA by taking a nationwide survey at **farmers.gov/survey**! The survey is completely anonymous, will take about 10 minutes to complete, is available in multiple languages, and will be open until March 31, 2023. The survey focuses on gathering feedback about the Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service and Risk Management Agency.

All farmers, ranchers and forest managers are encouraged to take the survey. USDA would especially like to hear from prospective customers: those who don't know about USDA or have yet to work with USDA, and those who were unable to participate in the past. The survey will help USDA enhance support, improve programs and services, increase access, and advance equity for new and existing customers.

USDA announces details for the upcoming Census of Agriculture

America's farmers and ranchers will soon have the opportunity to be represented in the nation's only comprehensive and impartial agriculture data for every state, county and territory. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will mail the 2022 Census of Agriculture to millions of agriculture producers across the 50 states and Puerto Rico this fall.

The 2022 Census of Agriculture will be mailed in phases, starting with an invitation to respond online in November followed by paper questionnaires in December. Farm operations of all sizes, urban and rural, which produced and sold, or normally would have sold, $1,000 or more of agricultural product in 2022 are included in the ag census.

Collected in service to American agriculture since 1840 and now conducted every five years by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), the Census of Agriculture tells the story and shows the value of U.S. agriculture. It highlights land use and ownership, producer characteristics, production practices, income and expenditures, among other topics. Between ag census years, NASS considers revisions to the questionnaire to document changes and emerging trends in the industry. Changes to the 2022 questionnaire include new questions about the use of precision agriculture, hemp production, hair sheep, and updates to internet access questions.

To learn more about the Census of Agriculture, visit nass.usda.gov/AgCensus or call 800-727-9540. On the website, producers and other data users can access frequently asked questions, past ag census data, partner tools to help spread the word about the upcoming ag census, special study information, and more. For highlights of these and the latest information on the upcoming Census of Agriculture, follow USDA NASS on twitter @usda_nass.

Dairy Producers Can Now Enroll for 2023 Signup for Dairy Margin Coverage

Dairy producers can now enroll for 2023 coverage through the Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) Program, an important safety net program from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) that helps producers manage changes in milk and feed prices. Last year, USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) took steps to improve coverage, especially for small- and mid-sized dairies, including offering a new Supplemental DMC program and updating its feed cost formula to better address retroactive, current and future feed costs. These changes continue to support producers through this year's signup, which begins today and ends Dec. 9, 2022.

DMC is a voluntary risk management program that offers protection to dairy producers when the difference between the all-milk price and the average feed price (the margin) falls below a certain dollar amount selected by the producer.

So far in 2022, DMC payments to more than 17,000 dairy operations have triggered for August for more than $47.9 million. According to DMC margin projections, an indemnity payment is projected for September as well. At $0.15 per hundredweight for $9.50 coverage, risk coverage through DMC is a relatively inexpensive investment.

DMC offers different levels of coverage, even an option that is free to producers, aside from a $100 administrative fee. Limited resource, beginning, socially disadvantaged or a military veteran farmers or ranchers are exempt from paying the administrative fee, if requested. To determine the appropriate level of DMC coverage for a specific dairy operation, producers can use the online dairy decision tool.

Supplemental DMC

Last year, USDA introduced Supplemental DMC, which provided $42.8 million in payments to better help small- and mid-sized dairy operations that had increased production over the years but were not able to enroll the additional production. Supplemental DMC is also available for 2023.

Supplemental DMC coverage is applicable to calendar years 2021, 2022 and 2023. Eligible dairy operations with less than 5 million pounds of established production history may enroll supplemental pounds.

For producers who enrolled in Supplemental DMC in 2022, the supplemental coverage will automatically be added to the 2023 DMC contract that previously established a supplemental production history.

Producers who did not enroll in Supplemental DMC in 2022 can do so now. Producers should complete their Supplemental DMC enrollment before enrolling in 2023 DMC. To enroll, producers will need to provide their 2019 actual milk marketings, which FSA uses to determine established production history.

DMC Payments

Additionally, FSA will continue to calculate DMC payments using updated feed and premium hay costs, making the program more reflective of actual dairy producer expenses. These updated feed calculations use 100% premium alfalfa hay rather than 50%. The benefits of these feed cost adjustments were realized in the recent August 2022 margin payment as current high feed and premium hay costs were considered in payment calculations.

More Information

In addition to DMC, USDA offers other risk management tools for dairy producers, including the Dairy Revenue Protection (DRP) plan that protects against a decline in milk revenue (yield and price) and the Livestock Gross Margin (LGM) plan, which provides protection against the loss of the market value of livestock minus the feed costs. Both DRP and LGM livestock insurance policies are offered through the Risk Management Agency. Producers should contact their local crop insurance agent for more information.

For more information on DMC, visit the DMC webpage or contact your local USDA Service Center.

USDA Launches Loan Assistance Tool to Enhance Equity and Customer Service

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) launched a new online tool to help farmers and ranchers better navigate the farm loan application process. This uniform application process will help to ensure all farm loan applicants receive equal support and have a consistent customer experience with USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) regardless of their individual circumstances.

USDA experiences a high rate of incomplete or withdrawn applications, particularly among underserved customers, due in part to a challenging and lengthy paper-based application process. The Loan Assistance Tool is available 24/7 and gives customers an online step-by-step guide that supplements the support they receive when working in person with a USDA employee, providing materials that may help an applicant prepare their loan application in one tool.

Farmers can access the Loan Assistance Tool by visiting farmers.gov/farm-loan-assistance-tool and clicking the 'Get Started' button. From here they can follow the prompts to complete the Eligibility Self-Assessment and start the farm loan journey. 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.

The Loan Assistance Tool is the first of multiple farm loan process improvements that will be available to USDA customers on farmers.gov in the future. Other improvements and tools that are anticipated to launch in 2023 include:

- A streamlined and simplified direct loan application, reduced from 29 pages to 13 pages.
- An interactive online direct loan application that gives customers a paperless and electronic signature option, along with the ability to attach supporting documents such as tax returns.
- An online direct loan repayment feature that relieves borrowers from the necessity of calling, mailing, or visiting a local Service Center to pay a loan installment.

Background

USDA provides access to credit to approximately 115,000 producers who cannot obtain sufficient commercial credit through direct and guaranteed farm loans. With the funds and direction Congress provided in Section 22006 of the Inflation Reduction Act, USDA is taking action to immediately provide relief to qualifying distressed borrowers whose operations are at financial risk while working on making transformational changes to loan servicing so that borrowers are provided the flexibility and opportunities needed to address the inherent risks and unpredictability associated with agricultural operations.

USDA Announces First Three Lenders for Heirs' Property Relending Program

USDA is announcing that Shared Capital Cooperative, Akiptan, Inc. and the Cherokee Nation Economic Development Trust Authority (CNEDTA), have been approved or conditionally approved as intermediary lenders through the Heirs' Property Relending Program (HPRP). Once HPRP loans with these lenders close, these lenders will help agricultural producers and landowners resolve heirs' land ownership and succession issues. Additionally, USDA encourages more intermediary lenders, including cooperatives, credit unions and nonprofit organizations to apply. More information is at farmers.gov/heirs/relending.

Heirs may apply directly to the intermediary lenders for loans to resolve land ownership and succession issues.

Biden-Harris Administration Makes $500 Million Available to Increase Innovative American-Made Fertilizer Production

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced that the Biden-Harris Administration is making $500 million in grants available to increase American-made fertilizer production to spur competition and combat price hikes on U.S. farmers caused by the war in Ukraine.

The Biden-Harris Administration's Fertilizer Production Expansion Program is part of a whole-of-government effort to promote competition in agricultural markets. The funds are being made available through the Commodity Credit Corporation.

Eligible entities are for-profit businesses and corporations, nonprofit entities, Tribes and Tribal organizations, producer-owned cooperatives and corporations, certified benefit corporations, and state or local governments. Private entities must be independently owned and operated to apply.

The Department will begin accepting applications in the coming days via www.grants.gov. Notably, there will be two opportunities for submission. Learn more.

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. **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. For more information regarding ELAP, contact your local County USDA Service Center or visit fsa.usda.gov/disaster.

Before You Break Out New Ground, Ensure Your Farm Meets Conservation Compliance

The term “sodbusting” is used to identify the conversion of land from native vegetation to commodity crop production after December 23, 1985. As part of the conservation provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985, if you’re proposing to produce agricultural commodities (crops that require annual tillage including one pass planting operations and sugar cane) on land that has been determined highly erodible and that has no crop history prior to December 23, 1985, that land must be farmed in accordance with a conservation plan or system that ensures no substantial increase in soil erosion.

Eligibility for many USDA programs requires compliance with a conservation plan or system on highly erodible land (HEL) used for the production of agricultural commodities. This includes Farm Service Agency (FSA) loan, disaster assistance, safety net, price support, and conservation programs; Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) conservation programs; and Risk Management Agency (RMA) Federal crop insurance.

Before you clear or prepare areas not presently under production for crops that require annual tillage, you are required to file Form AD-1026 “Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation Certification,” with FSA indicating the area to be brought into production. The notification will be referred to NRCS to determine if the field is considered highly erodible land. If the field is considered HEL, you are required to implement a conservation plan or system that limits the erosion to the tolerable soil loss (T) for the predominant HEL soil on those fields.

In addition, prior to removing trees or conducting any other land manipulations that may affect wetlands, remember to update form AD-1026, to ensure you remain in compliance with the wetland conservation provisions.

Prior to purchasing or renting new cropland acres, it is recommended that you check with your local USDA Service Center to ensure your activities will be in compliance with the highly erodible land and wetland conservation provisions.

For additional information on highly erodible land conservation and wetland conservation compliance, contact your local USDA Service Center.

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.

USDA Expands Farmers.gov to Include Farm Records

Producers with farmers.gov accounts can now access farm records and maps online, the latest self-service feature added to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) website.

You can quickly and easily access your land information in real time by desktop computer, tablet or phone. Capabilities include:

- View, print and export detailed farm records such as cropland, base acres, yields, CRP acres, land ownership details, and much more;
- View, print and export farm/tract maps that can be provided to lenders, chemical or fertilizer providers, and FSA for reporting acreage and crop insurance agents; and
- Export common land unit (field) boundaries as ESRI shapefiles.

The ability to access these records on demand without a visit to the service center saves you time and money.

Farmers.gov now includes the most popular functionalities from FSAFarm+, the FSA portal for producers, while providing enhanced functionality and an improved user experience. A new enhancement expands the scope of accessibility to include farmers and ranchers who are members of an entity, as well as people with a power of attorney form (FSA-211) on file with FSA.

Managing USDA Business Online

Using farmers.gov, producers, entities and those acting on their behalf can also:

- View, upload, download, and e-sign conservation documents.
- Request financial assistance, including submitting a program application.
- View and submit conservation requests.
- View technical references and submit questions.
- Access information on current and past conservation practices, plans and contracts.
- Report practice completion and request practice certification.
- View farm loan and interest information (producers only).

Future plans include adding the ability to import and view other shapefiles, such as precision agriculture planting boundaries.

To access your information, you'll will need a USDA eAuth account to login to farmers.gov. After obtaining an eAuth account, producers should visit farmers.gov and sign into the site's authenticated portal via the Sign In/Sign Up link at the top right of the website. Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox or Microsoft Edge are the recommended browsers to access the feature.

In addition to the self-service features available by logging into farmers.gov, the website also has ample information on USDA programs, including pandemic assistance, farm loans, disaster assistance, conservation programs and crop insurance. Recently, USDA updated the navigation and organization of the site as well as added some new webpages, including "Get Involved," "Common Forms," and "Translations." Learn more about these changes.

USDA to Invest up to $300 million in New Organic Transition Initiative

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced details of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) $300 million investment, including with American Rescue Plan funds, in a new Organic Transition Initiative that will help build new and better markets and streams of income for farmers and producers. Organic production allows producers to hold a unique position in the marketplace and thus take home a greater share of the food dollar.

According to the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, the number of non-certified organic farms actively transitioning to organic production dropped by nearly 71 percent since 2008. Through the comprehensive support provided by this initiative USDA hopes to reverse this trend, opening opportunities for new and beginning farmers and expanding direct consumer access to organic foods through increased production.

The initiative will deliver wrap-around technical assistance, including farmer-to-farmer mentoring; provide direct support through conservation financial assistance and additional crop insurance assistance, and support market development projects in targeted markets.

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), Risk Management Agency (RMA) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) are the primary agencies supporting the Initiative, which will focus on three areas.

Transition to Organic Partnership Program

Through this initiative, USDA aims to ensure that farmers transitioning to organic have the support they need to navigate that transition, including a full supply chain to American consumers who demand organic choices in their supermarkets daily. AMS will build partnership networks in six regions across the United States with trusted local organizations serving direct farmer training, education, and outreach activities. The organizations will connect transitioning farmers with mentors, building paid mentoring networks to share practical insights and advice. Each regional team will also provide community building, including train-the-mentor support; as well as technical assistance, workshops, and field days covering topics including organic production practices, certification, conservation planning, business development (including navigating the supply chain), regulations, and marketing to help transitioning and recently transitioned producers overcome technical, cultural, and financial shifts during and immediately following certification. USDA will provide up to $100 million for this program.

Direct Farmer Assistance

NRCS will develop a new Organic Management conservation practice standard and offer financial and technical assistance to producers who implement the practice. Payments will be modeled on those already available to producers meeting the existing nutrient and pest management conservation practice standards. USDA will provide $75 million for this effort. This will include an increase in organic expertise throughout its regions, creating organic experts at each of its regional technology support centers. These experts will train staff who provide direct services to USDA customers. These services include hosting hands-on organic training for state and field NRCS staff and fielding organic-related staff questions.

USDA will provide $25 million to RMA for the new Transitional and Organic Grower Assistance Program (TOGA) which will support transitioning and certain certified organic producers' participation in crop insurance, including coverage of a portion of their insurance premium.

Organic Pinpointed Market Development Support

Stakeholders have shared that specific organic markets have market development risks due to inadequate organic processing capacity and infrastructure, a lack of certainty about market access, and insufficient supply of certain organic ingredients. This AMS initiative will focus on key organic markets where the need for domestic supply is high, or where additional processing and distribution capacity is needed for more robust organic supply chains. Examples of markets seeking support include organic grain and feed; legumes and other edible rotational crops; and livestock and dairy. USDA will invest up to $100 million to help improve organic supply chains in pinpointed markets. The Department will seek stakeholder input on these pinpointed initiatives beginning in September, resulting in an announcement of specific policy initiatives later this year.

Other USDA Organic Assistance

This USDA initiative complements existing assistance for organic producers, including FSA's Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP) and Organic and Transitional Education and Certification Program (OTECP). OCCSP helps producers obtain or renew their organic certification, and OTECP provides additional funding to certified and transitioning producers during the pandemic.

NRCS offers conservation programs, such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), which can provide assistance to help with managing weeds and pests, and establishing high tunnels, improving soil health, and implementing other practices key to organic operations. RMA also administers federal crop insurance options available to organic producers, including Whole Farm Revenue Protection and Micro Farm.

Keeping Livestock Inventory Records

Livestock inventory records are necessary in the event of a natural disaster, so remember to keep them updated.

When disasters strike, the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) can help you if you've suffered excessive livestock death losses and grazing or feed losses due to eligible natural disasters.

To participate in livestock disaster assistance programs, you'll be required to provide verifiable documentation of death losses resulting from an eligible adverse weather event and must submit a notice of loss to your local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss of livestock is apparent. For grazing or feed losses, you must submit a notice of loss to your local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent and should maintain documentation and receipts.

You should record all pertinent information regarding livestock inventory records including:

- Documentation of the number, kind, type, and weight range of livestock
- Beginning inventory supported by birth recordings or purchase receipts.

For more information on documentation requirements, contact your local County USDA Service Center or visit fsa.usda.gov.

Obtaining Payments Due to Deceased Producers

In order to claim a Farm Service Agency (FSA) payment on behalf of a deceased producer, all program conditions for the payment must have been met before the applicable producer's date of death.

If a producer earned a FSA payment prior to his or her death, the following is the order of precedence for the representatives of the producer:

- administrator or executor of the estate
- the surviving spouse
- surviving sons and daughters, including adopted children
- surviving father and mother
- surviving brothers and sisters
- heirs of the deceased person who would be entitled to payment according to the State law

For FSA to release the payment, the legal representative of the deceased producer must file a form FSA-325 to claim the payment for themselves or an estate. The county office will verify that the application, contract, loan agreement, or other similar form requesting payment issuance, was signed by the applicable deadline by the deceased or a person legally authorized to act on their behalf at that time of application.

If the application, contract or loan agreement form was signed by someone other than the deceased participant, FSA will determine whether the person submitting the form has the legal authority to submit the form.

Payments will be issued to the respective representative's name using the deceased program participant's tax identification number. Payments made to representatives are subject to offset regulations for debts owed by the deceased.

FSA is not responsible for advising persons in obtaining legal advice on how to obtain program benefits that may be due to a participant who has died, disappeared or who has been declared incompetent.

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