

May 2020



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

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Washington State FSA Newsletter

**Washington State Farm
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CRP Enrollment Process Continues

Producers are reminded that if there general CRP offer was accepted this spring, there are a number of forms to be completed and signed before the enrollment is complete and a contract is approved. If you are provided forms or other materials to complete and sign by FSA or NRCS, please respond to these as quickly as possible. Failure to complete all required paperwork, and provide all required signatures, could result in the contract not being approved if deadlines are missed. NRCS must complete the conservation plan and obtain the signatures of all participants on the contract by September 11, and FSA must have all records and signatures in place to approve the contract by September 30, or the offer will likely be rejected.

Deadlines for Commodity Loans and LDPs Approaching

State Executive Director:

Jon Wyss

State Committee:

Katlenia Vejraska, Chair
Maureen Harkcom, Member
Jesus Limon, Member
Robyn Meenach, Member
Bruce Nelson, Member

Marketing Assistance Loans (MALs) and Loan Deficiency Payments (LDPs) provide financing and marketing assistance for feed grains, soybeans, and pulse crops. MALs provide producers interim financing after harvest to help them meet cash flow needs without having to sell their commodities when market prices are typically at harvest-time lows. A producer who is eligible to obtain a loan, but agrees to forgo the loan, may obtain an LDP if such a payment is triggered.

To find contact information for your local office go to www.fsa.usda.gov/wa

FSA is still accepting requests for 2019 MALs and LDPs for certain eligible commodities after harvest. The final date to request a MAL or LDP for 2019 corn, dry peas, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, rice, safflower seed, chickpeas, soybeans, and sunflower seeds is **May 31, 2020**. At this time, with FSA county offices closed to the public as a health and safety precaution against the spread of COVID-19, initial MAL or LDP requests can be made via phone, fax, email, or mail. If a MAL or LDP is requested, FSA county offices will assist producers in completing the official CCC-666 Commodity Loan Request or the CCC-633EZ LDP Agreement and Request, sending the form to producers via email, fax, or mail for final review and signature. The completed and signed forms should then be returned to the county office as soon as possible via email, fax, or mail.

To be eligible for a commodity loan the crop must have been produced, mechanically harvested, and be in a storable condition. Loan applicants must be in compliance with conservation and wetland protection requirements. Acreage reports for all cropland on your farms must be on file, and you must retain beneficial interest in the commodity until the loan is repaid or Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) takes title to the commodity. Producers are responsible for maintaining the quantity and quality of the commodity pledged as collateral for a farm-stored or warehouse-stored loan. Normally commodity loans mature nine months after the month the loan is approved and funds have been disbursed, but recently policy changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic now allow for nonrecourse loans in good standing to mature twelve months after the month the loan is approved. This policy will remain in place for all eligible loans until September 30, 2020.

Loan Deficiency Payments (LDP) have triggered for lentils. LDP's are direct payments made in lieu of a marketing assistance loan when the CCC determined value, which is based on the current local price, is below the applicable loan rate. For lentils, the local prices and loan rates are set at a national level. The payment is the difference between the price and loan rate times the eligible quantity. Pulse crop LDP rates are updated on a weekly basis. To be considered eligible for an LDP, producers must have form [CCC-633EZ](#), page 1 on file at their local FSA office before losing beneficial interest in the crop. For lentils, page 2 of the form must

be submitted when payment is requested. Payments are processed after page 2 has been submitted and approved.

In order to receive a MAL or LDP, all related application forms must be completed and submitted to your local FSA office prior to loss of beneficial interest. Additional eligibility requirements must be met before payments can be paid. For more information and additional eligibility requirements, please contact your local [county FSA office](#).

CRP Grassland Signup

Farmers and ranchers may apply to enroll grasslands in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Grasslands signup beginning March 16 through May 15. Through CRP Grasslands, participants retain the right to conduct common grazing practices, such as haying, mowing or harvesting seed from the enrolled land. Timing of haying may be restricted by the primary nesting season of birds, but grazing generally will not be. Participants will receive an annual rental payment and may receive up to 50 percent cost-share for establishing approved conservation practices such as cross fencing and livestock water developments. The CRPG rental rate for each county is listed below. CRPG rental payments are subject to the same payment as regular CRP.

Farmers and ranchers may apply to enroll grasslands in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Grasslands signup beginning March 16 through May 15. Through CRP Grasslands, participants retain the right to conduct common grazing practices, such as haying, mowing or harvesting seed from the enrolled land. Timing of haying may be restricted by the primary nesting season of birds, but grazing generally will not be. Participants will receive an annual rental payment and may receive up to 50 percent cost-share for establishing approved conservation practices such as cross fencing and livestock water developments. The CRPG rental rate for each county is listed below. CRPG rental payments are subject to the same payment as regular CRP.

The duration of the CRPG contract is either 10 or 15 years. FSA will rank applications using a number of factors including existence of expiring CRP land, threat of conversion or development, existing grassland, and predominance of native species cover, and cost. The 2018 Farm Bill set aside 2 million acres for CRP Grassland enrollment within the overall CRP acreage cap. Contact your local office for more information on CRPG and how to make an offer by May 15.

Adams	\$3	Grays Harbor	\$35	Pierce	\$35
Asotin	\$4	Island	\$35	San Juan	\$35
Benton	\$19	Jefferson	\$35	Skagit	\$72
Chelan	\$19	King	\$65	Skamania	\$35
Clallam	\$35	Kitsap	\$35	Snohomish	\$87
Clark	\$49	Kittitas	\$19	Spokane	\$6
Columbia	\$4	Klickitat	\$4	Stevens	\$6

Cowlitz	\$35	Lewis	\$35	Thurston	\$25
Douglas	\$6	Lincoln	\$6	Wahkiakum	\$35
Ferry	\$3	Mason	\$35	Walla Walla	\$20
Franklin	\$6	Okanogan	\$3	Whatcom	\$42
Garfield	\$4	Pacific	\$35	Whitman	\$5
Grant	\$6	Pend Oreille	\$3	Yakima	\$19

USDA Reports Record Enrollment in Key Farm Safety-Net Programs

Producers signed a record 1.77 million contracts for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for the 2019 crop year, which is more than 107 percent of the total contracts signed compared with a 5-year average. USDA also reminds producers that June 30 is the deadline to enroll in ARC and PLC for the 2020 crop year.

"Producers for several years have experienced low commodity prices, a volatile trade environment and catastrophic natural disasters," said Richard Fordyce, Administrator of USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA). "Farmers looking to mitigate these risks recognize that ARC and PLC provide the financial protections they need to weather substantial drops in crop prices or revenues."

Producers interested in enrolling for 2020 should contact their FSA county office. Producers must enroll by June 30 and make their one-time update to PLC payment yields by September 30.

FSA attributes the significant participation in the 2019 crop year ARC and PLC programs to increased producer interest in the programs under the 2018 Farm Bill and to an increase in eligible farms because of the selling and buying of farms and new opportunities for beginning farmers and military veterans with farms having 10 or fewer base acres. Enrollment for 2019 ended March 16.

USDA Service Centers, including FSA county offices, are open for business by phone only, and field work will continue with appropriate social distancing. While program delivery staff will continue to come into the office, they will be working with producers by phone and using online tools whenever possible. All Service Center visitors wishing to conduct business with the FSA, Natural Resources Conservation Service or any other Service Center agency are required to call their Service Center to schedule a phone appointment. More information can be found at farmers.gov/coronavirus.

For more information on ARC and PLC, download the [program fact sheet](#) or the [2014-2018 farm bills comparison fact sheet](#). Online ARC and PLC election decision tools are available at www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc. To locate the nearest USDA Service Center, visit farmers.gov/service-center-locator.

Report Damage or Loss of NAP Covered Crops Immediately

If spring weather causes damage to or loss of your NAP covered crops, you must report this to your local FSA county office timely.

NAP notices of loss can be initiated by phone, email, or fax, but must be submitted in writing, to your local FSA county office for weather related events or adverse natural occurrences that cause damage to or loss of the NAP covered crop. To report crop damage or loss you must complete, sign, and file the loss portion of form CCC-576 with your FSA office by the earlier of either of the following:

- **15 calendar days** after the disaster occurrence or date of loss or damage to the crop or commodity first becomes apparent or
- **15 calendar days** after the normal harvest date.

Please note, producers of hand-harvested crops and certain perishable crops must notify FSA **within 72 hours** of when a loss becomes apparent. The initial notification can be made by email, fax, or phone.

While FSA county offices are closed to the public as a health and safety precaution against the spread of COVID-19, offices will take initial NAP notice of loss notifications via phone, email, or fax. Offices will assist producers in completing the official CCC-576 Notice of Loss Form as best as possible, sending the form to producers via email, fax, or mail for final review and signature. The completed and signed CCC-576 should then be returned to the county office as soon as possible via email, fax, or mail.

As the 2020 crop year progresses, it is imperative that a notice of loss is filed (for all affected NAP covered crops) within the timeframe noted above for each weather-related event or adverse natural occurrence. This will ensure FSA is notified that your NAP covered crop or crops have been damaged or lost. If the loss event is approved, remember to provide your crop production to your local FSA county office within 60 days after harvest or request an appraisal within 60 days of the normal harvest date so that the payment portion of form CCC-576 can be filed timely.

When a covered crop is lost or damage is significant, replanting is required if feasible and the final planting date has not passed. When you determine that the crop will be destroyed, abandoned, or not taken to harvest as intended, you must report this to your local FSA office so a field visit can be conducted by a certified loss adjuster. Once the crop appraisal has been completed, the loss adjuster will release the field and you can destroy the covered crop acres and replant to a different crop or harvest the acres for a different use.

Remember, failure to timely notify your FSA county office of NAP covered crop damage or loss will result in denial of NAP payment benefits. Destroying NAP covered crop acres or harvesting for a different use without a loss adjuster appraisal will result in those acres being determined ineligible for NAP payment benefits.

If you have any questions about NAP policy requirements, contact your local [county FSA office](#) for more information.

RMA Addresses Milk Dumping, Authorizes Other Flexibilities to Help Producers Amid Coronavirus Pandemic

At this time, **FSA does not have details on the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) and if it addresses situations involving milk dumping or the destruction of crops due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Information about CFAP will be provided as soon as it becomes available (click [here](#) for latest news release). Changes have been made under another** USDA agency to address some of these issues. The Risk Management Agency (RMA) is ensuring that milk producers are not inappropriately penalized if their milk must be dumped because of recent market disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic. In addition, RMA is extending inspection deadlines, waiving inspection requirements and authorizing more crop insurance transactions over the phone and electronically to help producers during the crisis.

Specifically, RMA is:

- Allowing dumped milk to be counted as milk marketings for the Dairy Revenue Production (DRP) or actual marketings for the Livestock Gross Margin for Dairy (LGM-Dairy) programs;
- Allowing phone and electronic transactions for 2021 crop year sales and reporting dates, including options and endorsements;
- Extending the deadline for some perennial crop Pre-Acceptance Inspection Reports (PAIRs);
- Waiving the 2021 crop year inspection requirements for the Nursery and Nursery Value Select (NVS) programs in certain cases.

Adjustments for Dumped Milk

COVID-19 shutdowns have caused disruption in the milk market, and dairy producers are dumping milk as a result. For the 2020 calendar year, RMA is allowing Approved Insurance Providers (AIPs) to count dumped milk toward the milk marketings for the DRP or actual marketings for the LGM-Dairy programs regardless of whether the milk was sold. Producers will still have to provide to the AIPs supporting documentation from the cooperative or milk handler verifying the actual pounds dumped and that the milk was dumped.

Notifications by Phone and Electronically

Notifications and information may be sent by phone or electronic methods between policyholders and their crop insurance agents to do the following:

- **2021 Crop Year Sales and Reporting:** To make policy elections, such as coverage level, and to report acreage and production.
- **Reporting Deadline for Options, Endorsements and Forms:** To select options and endorsements occurring for the sales closing, production reporting date and acreage reporting deadline.

Policyholders will be required to either sign digitally or must follow up with properly signed forms no later than July 15, 2020.

Deadline Extensions

RMA is providing the following deadline extensions for Perennial Inspections:

- **New Apple Tree Program:** AIPs must ensure inspections are completed by July 1, 2020, the date insurance attaches to the crop.

- **Pecan Tree Program:** AIPs must ensure inspections are completed by July 1, 2020, the date insurance attaches to the crop.
- **All Other Perennial Crop Policies:** The deadline is extended an additional 30 days for applicable perennial crop policies with an inspection deadline due on or before May 30, 2020.

Waiving of Inspection Requirements

RMA is authorizing AIPs to waive the 2021 crop year inspection requirements when an inspection report exists in the policyholder's file for the Nursery Crop Provisions and Nursery Value Select (NVS) for the 2017, 2018, 2019 or 2020 crop years. For the 2022 crop year, AIPs must inspect those policies that had a crop year 2021 waiver. Nursery Value Select (NVS) is a new program for the 2021 crop year, with a deadline for sign-up of May 1, 2020, and insurance attaching on June 1. Normally, any inspections should be conducted in May for insurance to begin, as scheduled, on June 1.

More Information

RMA announced other flexibilities on [March 27](#) and [April 3](#), including enabling producers to send notifications and reports electronically, extending the date for production reports, providing additional time and deferring interest on premium and other payments, allowing the use of self-certification replant inspections for certain crops and waiving the witness signature requirement for approval of Assignment of Indemnity. See all [RMA Managers Bulletins](#) for more detailed information.

RMA staff are working with AIPs and other customers by phone, mail and electronically to continue supporting crop insurance coverage for producers. Farmers with crop insurance questions or needs should continue to contact their insurance agents about conducting business remotely (by telephone or email).

For the most current updates on available services through USDA, visit farmers.gov/coronavirus.

RMA Offers New Crop Insurance Pilot Program for 2021 Nursery Crops

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Risk Management Agency (RMA) announced a new crop insurance pilot program, Nursery Value Select (NVS), for crop year 2021. NVS is another crop insurance option for nursery crop producers, including those growing hemp, in addition to the Nursery crop insurance program.

NVS is available in select counties in Alabama, Colorado, Florida, Michigan, New Jersey, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas and Washington to persons operating nurseries that meet certain criteria. For Oregon and Washington, the deadline to purchase NVS insurance, or the Sales Closing Date, is **September 1, 2020**.

NVS was developed with input from nursery producers. The pilot program is based on the existing Nursery crop insurance program, with these changes:

- Simplification of the application and annual policy renewal process;

- Allowing nursery producers to select the dollar amount of coverage that best fits their risk management needs, and for buy-up policies; coverage tailored by an individual practice (container or field grown) or by choosing from any of 10 potential plant categories;
- A simplified loss adjustment process that uses a more accurate approach to determining plant values by placing greater reliance on the nursery producer's actual sales receipts, along with increased producer participation in determining damaged plants' ability to be marketed or rehabilitated;
- Elimination of a plant list based on third-party software and greater reliance on the producer's inventory records, along with plant category naming conventions more familiar to the nursery industry;
- Tailored program dates that are better suited to the agronomic and industry nursery management practices in different regions across the country; and
- A new Occurrence Loss Option (OLO), moving the deductible from a unit level to a plant level for an additional premium (only available for buy-up policies).

Crop insurance is sold and delivered solely through private crop insurance agents. A list of crop insurance agents is available at all USDA Service Centers and online at the [RMA Agent Locator](#). Learn more about NVS at: www.rma.usda.gov/Topics/Nursery.

Availability of Farm Operating Loans

Do you need help financing your farm operating expenses? The Farm Service Agency (FSA) can help with a direct or guaranteed loan if you are not able or need help to acquire commercial credit from a lender. For all FSA loans, the applicant must be the operator of the farm after the loan is closed. Direct loans for operating expenses are received and processed by one of FSA's eight farm loan offices in the state of Washington. You must not be the owner of the farmland to apply. The loan can be used to help with production costs for the current crop year or to finance items such as equipment or breeding livestock over a longer period. An FSA farm loan officer will help you refine your business plan after applying to make sure that the loan is feasible based on the farm production and other income over the term of the loan. A direct loan is funded directly by FSA. The money used for direct loans comes from congressional appropriations received as part of the USDA budget. FSA is responsible for making and servicing the loan. The guaranteed Farm Loan Program helps farmers and ranchers to obtain loans from USDA-approved commercial lenders at reasonable terms to finance agricultural production. The lender receives the benefit of a safety net that FSA provides by guaranteeing the loan up to 95 percent against any future losses. The lender and the farmer or rancher complete the guarantee application and submit it to the FSA, after which the lender becomes FSA's customer. Guaranteed Loans enable lenders to extend credit to farm operators who do not qualify for standard commercial loans.

Join USDA in Following the #Plant2020 Progress

Follow #OurFarmers During #Plant2020

Spring planting is underway in Washington and we're following the progress as farmers complete field prep and plant their spring crops. We invite you to follow along or get involved by sharing your #Plant2020 photos and videos. To view the #Plant2020 progress, visit <https://arcg.is/1SmeuK>.

USDA is hiring multiple positions that close May 19, 2020

Douglas County – Program Technician

The Farm Service Agency office located in Waterville, WA is accepting applications for a Full-Time Permanent Program Technician position. Duties include carrying out office activities related to farm programs. The full vacancy announcement which includes qualifications and eligibility requirements will be posted on USA Jobs from May 5, 2020 through May 19, 2020 at www.usajobs.gov.

Franklin County – Program Technician

The Farm Service Agency office located in Pasco, WA is accepting applications for a Full-Time Permanent Program Technician position. Duties include field compliance and office activities related to farm programs. Some field walking, height related duties and travel is involved. The full vacancy announcement which includes qualifications and eligibility requirements will be posted on USA Jobs from May 5, 2020 through May 20, 2020 at www.usajobs.gov.

Location TBD – County Operations Trainee

Farm Service Agency has announced a Full-Time County Operation Trainee position. This is a paid position that offers one year of management and programs training. Upon completion the candidate has an opportunity to become a county office supervisor. The training does require extensive paid travel and may require relocation once completed.

The full vacancy announcement which includes qualifications and eligibility requirements will be posted on USA Jobs from May 5, 2020 through May 20, 2020 at www.usajobs.gov and All applicants must apply through USAJobs by the closing date.

All of these positions are an amazing opportunity to enter the Federal workforce, which offers excellent benefits, and flexible schedules. All applicants must apply through USAJobs by the closing date. Please contact Mitzi Stephens with questions at (509) 323-3007 or mitzi.stephens@usda.gov.

USDA is an Equal Opportunity Provider, Employer and Lender.

Important Dates and Deadlines

Now – July 1, 2020 – Primary Nesting Season for CRP. Activities on established CRP stands are prohibited April 1 through July 1 unless specifically authorized by FSA on a contract by contract basis. This restriction does not apply to contracts where the cover is being established at this time.

May 15, 2020 – Deadline to sign up for CRP Grasslands.

May 25, 2020 – Memorial Day. USDA service centers will be closed.

May 31, 2020 – Final date to request a MAL or LDP on 2019 corn, dry peas, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, rice, safflower seed, chickpeas, soybeans, and sunflower seeds.

June 15, 2020 – Nominations open for 2020 FSA County Committee Elections.

June 30, 2020 – Deadline to enroll in 2020 ARC/PLC.

July 15, 2020 – Final acreage reporting date for perennial forage, CRP, and spring-seeded crops.

July 15, 2020 – Deadline to report actual harvested production of 2019 NAP covered grass seeds, forages, and annually planted spring crops for actual production history (APH) purposes.

July 15, 2020 – Final date to report 2019 production for ARC-IC.

August 1, 2020 – County Committee election nominations due

August 21, 2020 – Deadline to submit completed and signed offers to re-enroll land in continuous CRP and CREP.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).