

December 2020



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

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Washington State FSA Newsletter

Washington State Farm Service Agency

11707 E. Sprague Ave, Ste 303
Spokane Valley, WA 99206

Apply Now for USDA's Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2

Application Deadline is December 11

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds farmers and ranchers that the deadline to apply for

Phone: 509-323-3000
Fax: 855-843-1172

www.fsa.usda.gov/wa

State Executive Director:
Jon Wyss

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

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

the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2 (CFAP 2) is Dec. 11, 2020. This program provides direct relief to producers who continue to face market disruptions and associated costs because of COVID-19.

CFAP 2 will provide up to \$14 billion to eligible producers of certain row crops, livestock, dairy, specialty crops, aquaculture and more. All eligible commodities, payment rates and calculations can be found on farmers.gov/cfap. CFAP 2 is a separate program from the first iteration of the program (CFAP 1) and interested producers must complete a new application to be eligible for payment for CFAP 2.

Customers seeking one-on-one support with the CFAP 2 application process can call 877-508-8364 to speak directly with a USDA employee ready to offer general assistance. This is a recommended first step before a producer engages the team at the FSA county office.

Application Options

Producers have several options for applying to the CFAP 2 program by the Dec. 11 deadline:

- Using an online portal at farmers.gov/cfap. This allows producers with secure USDA login credentials, known as eAuthentication, to certify eligible commodities online, digitally sign applications and submit directly to the local USDA Service Center.
- Completing the application form using our CFAP 2 Application Generator and Payment Calculator found at farmers.gov/cfap. This Excel workbook allows customers to input information specific to their operation to determine estimated payments and populate the application form, which can be printed, then signed and submitted to their local USDA Service Center.
- Downloading the AD-3117 application form from farmers.gov/cfap and manually completing the form to submit to the local USDA Service Center by mail, electronically, or by hand delivery to an office drop box. In some limited cases, the office may be open for in-person business by appointment. Visit farmers.gov/coronavirus/service-center-status to check the status of your local office.

USDA Service Centers can also work with producers to complete and securely transmit digitally-signed applications through two commercially available tools: Box and OneSpan. Producers who are interested in digitally signing their applications should notify their local FSA office when calling to discuss the CFAP 2 application process. You can learn more about these solutions at farmers.gov/mydocs.

Producers of commodities with payments based on acreage will use acreage and yield information provided by FSA through the annual acreage reporting process. Producers have the option to complete their application by working directly with their local FSA office or online through the CFAP 2 Application Portal.

All other eligibility forms, such as those related to adjusted gross income and payment information, can be downloaded from farmers.gov/cfap/apply. For existing FSA customers, including those who participated in CFAP 1, these documents are likely already on file.

Both CFAP 1 and CFAP 2 are self-certification programs, which means the applicant certifies the information submitted is correct. FSA will soon begin an important step in the internal controls portion of CFAP 1 by conducting spot checks. Producers have been randomly selected using a statistically sound methodology. These CFAP 1 applicants will be contacted by FSA staff and asked to provide supporting documentation to verify the information certified by the producer on their CFAP 1 application.

As of Nov. 9, FSA has paid more than \$9.5 billion with more than 576,000 applications for CFAP 2. This builds upon more than \$10.3 billion paid through CFAP 1.

More Information

To find the latest information on CFAP 2, visit farmers.gov/cfap or call 877-508-8364.

Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2 (CFAP2) Signup Ending December 11

The CFAP2 signup period ends December 11. The program provides benefits to offset the effects of the pandemic on a number of commodities. Most crops are eligible, including but not limited to barley, corn, sorghum, soybeans, sunflower, wheat alfalfa, buckwheat, canola, millet mustard, oats, rapeseed, safflower, triticale, apples, apricots, blueberries, caneberries, cantaloupes, cranberries, crenshaw melon, grapes, honeydew, nectarines, peaches, pears, plums, prunes, strawberries, watermelon, asparagus, bamboo shoots, batatas, bean sprouts, dry beans, green beans broccoli, Brussel sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, chickpeas, sweet corn, cucumbers, greens, kale, lentils, lettuce, mushrooms, onions, dry peas, green peas peppers, potatoes, pumpkins, rhubarb, vegetable seeds, spinach, squash, swiss chard, tomatillos, tomatoes, turnips, yam, peppermint, spearmint, nuts, dairy, cattle, hogs buffalo, sheep, eggs, honey, aquaculture, Christmas trees, and nursery.

Eligibility varies by commodity. Some crop benefits are based on 2020 acreage reported to FSA while others, such as most fruits, vegetables and specialty crops, are based on 2019 sales. Most livestock benefits are based on the producer's largest inventory of non-breeding stocks April 16-August 31, 2020. Dairy benefits use April-December, 2020 actual and estimated milk marketings.

Applicants must complete several eligibility documents unless they have done these earlier for other FSA programs. Producers must have an average adjusted gross income of \$900,000 or less or provide a certification from an accountant or attorney indicating at least 75% of their income is from farming, ranching or forestry. Applicants must still be in the business of farming when they apply, which can include land ownership. Please call your local FSA office to apply by December 11.

Conversation Reserve Program (CRP) Signup Dates Announced

The next general CRP signup will be held January 4 to February 12, 2021. This will be followed by a CRP Grassland signup March 15 to April 23, 2021. Current CRP contracts set to expire in 2021 can be offered for re-enrollment during these signups. Other land can also be offered general CRP if it was in annual crops or summer fallow 4 of the 6 years 2012-2017. Final rental rates for 2021 have still not been released by the National Office but are expected soon. Annual CRP payments are limited to \$50,000 per person or legal entity per year. In addition to rental payments, CRP provides 50% cost sharing to establish the required perennial cover. Contact your local FSA office to learn more about CRP and make arrangements to submit an offer.

2021 DMC Signup Deadline Approaching

Dairy producers have only a couple of weeks left to sign up for the 2021 Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) program. This voluntary program offers protection to dairy producers when the difference between the all-milk price and the average feed cost (the margin) falls below a certain dollar amount selected by the producer. The 2021 DMC program will provide coverage for the entire 2021 calendar year. **The deadline to enroll in the 2021 DMC program is December 11, 2020.**

All producers who want 2021 coverage, even those who took advantage of the 25 percent premium discount by locking in the coverage level for five years of margin protection coverage, are required to contact their local FSA county office during this signup period to pay the annual administrative fee.

For the dairy producers who did not lock into a coverage level, during signup a margin from \$4.00 to \$9.50 can be selected along with the percentage of covered production history from 5 percent up to 95 percent. [Learn more about the Dairy Margin Coverage \(DMC\) Program here.](#) Dairies can use the [DMC decision tool](#) to evaluate various scenarios using different coverage percentages and margin amounts.

DMC offers catastrophic coverage (\$4.00 at 95%) that costs an annual \$100 administrative fee. Producers can opt for greater coverage levels for a premium cost, in addition to the \$100

administrative fee. Dairy operations owned by limited resource, beginning, socially disadvantaged, or veteran farmers and ranchers may be eligible for a waiver of administrative fees. Producers who locked into a coverage level are required to certify the dairy operation is still commercially marketing milk, sign the CCC-801 DMC Contract and Annual Coverage Election form for 2021, and pay the annual administrative fee before the end of the signup period.

Contact your local county FSA office to make an appointment to sign up for 2021 DMC. Office that are open for appointments will pre-screen visitors based on health concerns or recent travel and visitors must adhere to social distancing guidelines. Visitors may also be required to wear a face covering during their appointment. FSA staff can also provide assistance by phone and through the use of online tools. To locate an office near you, visit farmers.gov/service-center-locator.

Get Commodity Loan Paperwork in Early to Receive Funds in 2020

If you are interested in obtaining a commodity loan and would like to have funds disbursed before the end of 2020 calendar year, **please request your loan and submit all required documents by December 18, 2020**. If not, please contact your local county office staff to verify when they will be available during the busy holiday season to process your loan request. Staff need sufficient time to process loans and trigger funds for disbursement before **noon on Monday, December 28**. After that, loan requests and funds cannot be disbursed until payment software is re-opened on the first workday of the New Year, **January 4, 2021**.

Unauthorized Disposition of Grain

If loan grain has been disposed of through feeding, selling, or any other form of disposal without prior written authorization from the county office staff, it is considered unauthorized disposition. The financial penalties for unauthorized dispositions are severe and a producer's name will be placed on a loan violation list for a two-year period. Always contact your local county FSA office before you haul any grain under loan.

2020 Crop Production Reporting Deadlines for NAP Covered Honey, Tree Fruits, Berries, and Grapes Approaching

Reporting of actual harvested production from the 2020 crop year is a requirement for producers who obtained Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage. To retain program eligibility for NAP covered crops, participating producers must annually report actual production to keep NAP program benefits and ensure the NAP actual production history (APH) reflects accurate yield data. Producers with 2020 NAP covered honey must report total harvested production by **January 2, 2021** for all honey produced during the 2020 calendar year. Producers of 2020 NAP covered tree fruits (apples, apricots, cherries, nectarines, peaches, pears, plums), nuts, blueberries, cranberries, and grapes must report actual harvested production by **January 15, 2021**.

If actual harvested production for NAP covered crops is not timely submitted to your local county FSA office, NAP benefits for crop losses will not be earned and the NAP yield could begin to drop significantly, affecting your future NAP coverage levels. To report production, complete and sign

form CCC-452 obtained from your local FSA county office. If you have any questions about production reporting or NAP payment requirements, contact your county FSA office.

USDA to Open Signup for the Conservation Reserve Program and CRP Grasslands in Early 2021

USDA today announced the 2021 signup periods for general Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and CRP Grasslands offers.

USDA today announced the 2021 signup periods for general Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and CRP Grasslands offers. General signup for CRP will be open from January 4, 2021 to February 12, 2021; signup for CRP Grasslands runs from March 15, 2021 to April 23, 2021. Both programs are competitive and provide annual rental payments for land devoted to conservation purposes.

CRP and the many focused programs that come under it, like CRP Grasslands, are some of the most critical tools to help producers better manage their operations while conserving natural resources. CRP has proven to protect the Nation's valuable resources. Next year's signup gives farmers and ranchers an opportunity to enroll in CRP for the first time or continue their participation for another term.

Producers may apply by contacting their FSA office.

Time to Complete Crop Acreage Reports for Fall-Seeded Crops

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds agricultural producers in Washington State to complete [crop acreage reports](#) by December 15, 2020 for fall-seeded small grains and oil seed crops.

"To make sure you're eligible for many USDA programs, you need to file an accurate crop acreage report by the applicable deadline,"

The following upcoming acreage reporting dates are applicable for Washington State Growers:

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| December 15, 2020 | Fall seeded small grains, Oilseed crops, lentils and onions. |
| January 15, 2021 | Perennial fruit or nut crops, Cranberries, and Grapes |
| July 15, 2021 | All other crops and land uses including CRP. |

To complete your acreage report, please call your local County FSA office to schedule an appointment. FSA can work with producers to file timely acreage reports by phone, email, online tools and virtual meetings. Due the recent changes in COVID-19 protocols in our state, in person meeting are not available.

All our county offices are using Microsoft Teams software to virtually meet with producers to review maps and documents for certification. Producers who want to schedule a virtual appointment can download the Microsoft Teams app on their smart phone or tablet and call the FSA office for an

appointment. You can also use Microsoft Teams from your personal computer without downloading software.

The County FSA offices will provide you tract level maps along with instructions for completing and returning the maps through either mail, email or through commercially available free and secure online tools such as Box for file sharing and One-Span for eSignature solutions.

After planting is complete, producers must return their signed form FSA-578 certifying their acreage report to the FSA office before the file reporting date.

The following exception applies to acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the acreage reporting date, the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.
- Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policy holders should note that the acreage reporting date for NAP-covered crops is the earlier of the dates listed above or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins.

For questions, please call your local County FSA office.

All USDA Service Centers are open for business. All Service Center visitors wishing to conduct business with FSA, Natural Resources Conservation Service or any other Service Center agency should call ahead and schedule an appointment. Service Centers that are open for appointments will pre-screen visitors based on health concerns or recent travel, and visitors must adhere to social distancing guidelines. Visitors are also required to wear a face covering during their appointment. Our program delivery staff will be in the office, and they will be working with our producers in the office, by phone and using online tools. More information can be found at farmers.gov/coronavirus.

NAP Coverage – Honey Application Closing Date Updated

For crops that are not insurable with catastrophic (CAT) level coverage through your crop insurance agent, Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage is an available tool to help mitigate financial risk. NAP covers non-insurable crops damaged, lost or prevented from being planted due to a natural weather-related disaster condition. Honey is an eligible NAP crop in the state of Washington. Due to recent policy changes, the deadline to apply for NAP coverage for honey has been updated for 2021 and subsequent crop years. **The new 2021 NAP application for coverage closing date for honey is December 31, 2020.**

There are several coverage level options through this program. NAP provides a catastrophic level (CAT) of coverage for losses that exceed 50 percent of the expected yield at 55 percent of the approved NAP price for the crop. The 2018 Farm Bill reinstated higher levels of coverage, from 50 to 65 percent of expected production in 5 percent increments, at 100 percent of the approved NAP price. Producers who elect a higher level of coverage must “buy-up” and pay a premium in addition to the service fee. Producers with an organic certification can select the organic option when requesting NAP coverage at either CAT or buy-up levels of coverage at 100 percent of the approved organic NAP price.

Beginning, limited resource, targeted underserved farmers or ranchers, and qualified veteran farmers or ranchers are eligible for a NAP premium reduction. NAP payment limitation for basic CAT level coverage remains at \$125,000 per individual or legal entity.

NAP service fee for honey for all coverage levels is \$325. This fee must be paid by the application closing date for a NAP application for coverage to be considered timely filed. A waiver of the NAP service fee is available to beginning, limited resource, traditionally underserved farmers or ranchers, and qualified veteran farmers or ranchers. Certification forms must be completed before the appropriate NAP application for coverage close date for waivers or premium reductions to apply.

NAP coverage for eligible 2021 crops should be purchased no later than the established NAP application for coverage closing date for the crop. Additional eligibility requirements will need to be met before a benefit payment can be processed on eligible loss. **For honey, one such requirement is the completion of a 2021 crop acreage report for all colonies by January 2, 2021.** Throughout the year, please notify your local county FSA office within 30 days of any changes to either the total number of colonies or additional counties to which bees are moved. **For NAP yield purposes, honey production for the calendar year must be reported to FSA annually by January 2 of the next year.**

Click [here](#) to learn more about NAP coverage online. Contact [your local county FSA office](#) if you are interested in applying for NAP coverage, or if you have any questions regarding FSA programs for honey.

Required Certification for Honeybee Producers

All honeybee producers must provide certification of the number of colonies, the type, and names with shares of all producers who have an interest in the colonies **by January 2nd of each year.** Additionally, producers must also report within **30 days** any changes to their honeybee operations such as, acquisitions, splits, sales or disbursements, or transportations in/out of the county of bees that are associated to their operation. Failure to provide timely certification and changes will affect eligibility under Emergency Livestock Assistance Program (ELAP) for Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) and other disaster events.

National Weather Service

Did you know that the National Weather Service in Spokane has an experimental Cold Advisory for Newborn Livestock (CANL)? This product targets livestock that are less than 24 hours old, and have difficulty regulating their body temperature. The criteria is based on wind chill, precipitation amounts and cloud cover. To learn more about this, check out our webpage: www.weather.gov/otx/canl

Do you have a reliable weather source on your phone? If not, consider going to mobile.weather.gov where you can create a bookmark that works like an app. If you have any questions about these products or other resources, please email us at nws.spokane@noaa.gov and we would be happy to help.

Election and Enrollment for 2021 ARC/PLC Program

The 2018 Farm Bill reauthorized the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program. Elections and enrollment for 2021 ARC/PLC began on **October 19, 2020 and will run through March 15, 2021.**

The 2018 Farm Bill allows for changes to the farm election for 2021. Any producers wishing to make changes to the farm election must obtain signatures from all producers on the farm with an interest in the farm's cropland acres (excluding CRP) for the new election to be considered valid. Producers may elect to enroll in PLC, ARC-CO, or ARC-IC programs for 2021. Elections to PLC or ARC-CO are made on a covered commodity by covered commodity basis and all covered commodity base acres are elected into ARC-IC if that program is chosen for a farm.

Failure to agree to an election change for 2021 by **March 15, 2021** will result in the farm defaulting to the election made in the 2019 and 2020 programs years.

The 2018 Farm Bill provides that for farms on which all cropland was planted to grass or pasture, including cropland that was idle or fallow, from January 1, 2009 through December 31, 2017 will have all base acres and payment yields maintained, but with no payment for those base acres during the years 2019 through 2023. Farms that reported all grass, idle, or fallow during that entire period may be eligible for an NRCS program

USDA Service Centers are Here to Help!

One-on-one assistance for farmers and ranchers, free of charge

At USDA, we are committed to helping farmers complete loan applications, environmental reviews, and other paperwork free of charge. One-on-one support is available at more than 2,300 USDA Service Centers nationwide. USDA's Farm Service Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Service staff are usually co-located at these Service Centers, and can help guide farmers to the best USDA assistance based on their unique goals, whether it is loans, conservation programs, or insurance.

Service Center staff can guide farmers through the process of preparing and submitting required paperwork on their own, with no need to hire a paid preparer. Language translation service is available in all USDA Service Centers, so one-on-one assistance with a Service Center employee can be translated in real time for farmers requiring it. And while some program and loan applications do have an administrative fee for filing, there is never a charge for preparation services provided by USDA staff.

Farmers who come to the USDA Service Center can:

- Establish their farm by registering for a farm number, which is required for USDA programs and assistance.
- Learn how to meet conservation compliance provisions.
- Verify eligibility for USDA programs.
- Discuss their business and conservation goals.
- Create a conservation plan.
- Fill out and file loan and program applications.

To find the nearest USDA Service Center, visit <https://www.farmers.gov/service-center-locator>.

2020 Farm Service Agency County Committee Elections Underway

Ballots Have Been Mailed to Eligible Voters

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has mailed ballots for the Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committee elections to eligible farmers and ranchers across the country. To be counted, ballots must be returned to the local FSA county office or postmarked by December 7.

“FSA has over 7,000 county committee members nationwide who serve their communities by providing input on our programs at the local level,” said FSA Administrator Richard Fordyce. “We value their knowledge and judgment as decisions are made about the services we provide, including disaster and safety-net programs.”

Each committee has three to 11 elected members who serve three-year terms of office, and at least one seat is up for election each year. Newly elected committee members will take office January 1, 2021. County committee members help FSA make important decisions on its commodity support programs, conservation programs, indemnity and disaster programs, and emergency programs and eligibility.

Producers must participate or cooperate in an FSA program to be eligible to vote in the county committee election. A cooperating producer is someone who has provided information about their farming or ranching operation(s) but may not have applied or received FSA program benefits. Also, producers who supervise and conduct the farming operations of an entire farm, but are not of legal voting age, may be eligible to vote.

Producers can find out if their local administrative area is up for election and if they are eligible to vote by contacting their local FSA county office. Eligible voters who did not receive a ballot in the mail can request one from their local FSA county office. Visit fsa.usda.gov/elections for more information.

All USDA Service Centers are open for business, including some that are open to visitors to conduct business in person by appointment only. All Service Center visitors wishing to conduct business with FSA, Natural Resources Conservation Service or any other Service Center agency should call ahead and schedule an appointment. Service Centers that are open for appointments will pre-screen visitors based on health concerns or recent travel, and visitors must adhere to social distancing guidelines. Visitors are also required to wear a face covering during their appointment. Our program delivery staff will be in the office, and they will be working with our producers in the office, by phone and using online tools. More information can be found at farmers.gov/coronavirus.

Important Dates and Deadlines

December 7, 2020 – County Committee ballots are due to FSA county offices or postmarked by this date.

December 11, 2020 – Deadline to apply for Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2 (CFAP 2).

December 11, 2020 – Deadline to sign up for 2021 Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC). Annual administrative fees and a signed CCC-801 form are still due by this date even if the dairy operation chose to lock into a coverage level for five years.

December 14, 2020 – Deadline to apply for 2020 Seafood Trade Relief Program (STRP).

December 15, 2020 – 2021 crop acreage reporting deadline for fall-seeded crops. This includes fall-planted alfalfa, canola, lentils, mint, onions, peas, and small grains. 2020 NAP production reports due for all listed crops.

December 18, 2020 – Last day to submit all required documents for a commodity loan request or schedule an appointment with local county FSA office to ensure loan disbursement in the 2020 calendar year.

December 25, 2020 – Christmas Day. USDA service centers will be closed.

January 1, 2021 – New Year's Day. USDA service centers will be closed.

January 1, 2021 – Newly elected county committee members take office.

January 2, 2021 – 2021 crop acreage reporting deadline for honey. 2020 NAP honey production due.

January 4, 2021 – General CRP signup period opens. Signup ends February 12, 2021.

January 15, 2021 – 2021 crop acreage reporting deadline for apples, apricots, blueberries, cherries, cranberries, grapes, nectarines, peaches, pears, and plums. 2020 NAP production due for all listed crops.

January 18, 2021 – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. USDA Service Centers will be closed.

January 30, 2021 – Deadline to file a 2020 ELAP Application for Payment and provide supporting documentation.

January 30, 2021 – Deadline to file a 2020 LFP Application for Payment and provide supporting documentation.

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).

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