

## In This Issue:

- [Apply for OCCSP for Organic Certification Cost Share Reimbursements](#)
- [NAP Coverage – Consider Protecting 2023 Crops Now](#)
- [2021 ARCPLC Payments](#)
- [October Payment Cycle to Begin](#)
- [FSA hiring multiple positions that close soon](#)
- [USDA Hiring for a Temporary Program Technician Positions in Various Locations](#)
- [FSA Youth Loans](#)
- [Important Dates and Deadlines](#)

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## Apply for OCCSP for Organic Certification Cost Share Reimbursements

Are you an organic producer or handler who received an organic certification from a USDA-accredited certifying agent? If so, you can request cost-share assistance through the [Organic Certification Cost Share Program](#) (OCCSP). Cost share funds are available for eligible certification expenses paid between Oct. 1, 2021, and Sept. 30, 2022. Eligible paid expenses must be submitted with supporting documentation on a 2022 OCCSP application. **2022 OCCSP applications are due Nov. 1, 2022.**

OCCSP provides cost-share assistance to producers and handlers of agricultural products for the costs of obtaining or maintaining organic certification under the USDA's National Organic Program. Eligible producers include any certified producers or handlers who have paid organic certification fees to a USDA-accredited certifying agent. Eligible expenses for cost-share reimbursement include application fees, inspection costs, fees related to equivalency agreement and arrangement requirements, travel expenses for inspectors, user fees, sales assessments and postage.

Producers and handlers certified organic by Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) should have applied for cost-share reimbursement through WSDA. If cost-share is paid through WSDA, producers and handles are not eligible to receive duplicate cost-share reimbursement from USDA-FSA. If you have an organic operation certified by WSDA and you missed the WSDA reimbursement application deadline, then you can

apply for OCCSP, but additional documentation will be required by FSA to verify that a duplicate payment was not processed through WSDA.

For 2022 OCCSP, certified producers and handlers are eligible to receive reimbursement for up to 50 percent of the certified organic operation's eligible expenses, up to a maximum of \$500 per scope. In Washington State, eligible certification scopes remain the same – crops, livestock, wild crops, and processing/handling. The payment calculation and maximum payment amount are applicable to all certified organic operations, regardless of whether they apply through an FSA county office or through WSDA.

To learn more about organic certification cost share, please visit the [OCCSP webpage](#) or contact [your local USDA Service Center](#). All USDA Service Centers are open for business, including some that are open to visitors to conduct business in person by appointment only. Please call ahead to schedule an appointment.

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## NAP Coverage – Consider Protecting 2023 Crops Now

For crops that are not insurable with catastrophic level coverage (CAT) 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.

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. Buy-up coverage is not available for crops intended for grazing.

Premium cost for buy-up coverage on yield-based crops will be calculated based on the lesser of either of the following:

- The applicable payment limitation (\$300,000 for buy-up) X 5.25% premium fee = \$15,750 maximum premium per individual or legal entity, or
- The sum of acres X APH yield X share X coverage level X NAP price X 5.25% premium fee for each NAP crop with buy-up coverage selected.

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

NAP service fee is \$325 per crop per county, up to \$825 per county, not to exceed \$1,950 per producer with NAP covered crops in multiple counties. A waiver of the NAP service

fee is available to beginning, limited resource, and traditionally underserved farmers and ranchers.

NAP coverage for eligible 2023 crops should be purchased at least 1 day before the crop is planted, but no later than the established NAP application for coverage closing date for the crop or crops listed as follows:

**November 20, 2022** – 2023 asparagus, berries, grapes, hops, tree fruits, nuts, and other perennial crops not listed under the 9/30 category.

**December 31, 2022** – Honey.

**March 15, 2023** – 2023 artichokes, beets (for seed or fresh), buckwheat, camelina, carrots (for fresh or processing), hemp, mustard, radish (for seed or fresh), small grain forage (wheat, barley, oats, peas), and any other spring planted crops not mentioned in other closing dates.

NAP application for coverage deadlines are also posted on the Washington State FSA website located [here](#). Contact your local county FSA office if you are interested in applying for NAP coverage, or if you have any questions regarding NAP availability or application closing dates.

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## 2021 ARCPLC Payments

Final Market Year Average (MYA) prices for 2021 have been published for Wheat, Barley, and Oats. The MYA for wheat, barley and oats exceeded the Statutory Reference Price so no payment will be earned under PLC. MYA prices for some crops have not been finalized yet and will be released soon.

Actual county yields have been announced for several crops under the ARC-CO program and can be accessed [here](#) to determine if ARC-CO payments will be earned under specific crops.

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## October Payment Cycle to Begin

FSA will begin the October payment cycles for the CRP and ARCPLC programs soon. Processing of payments for older CRP contracts and CRP-TIP contracts will begin on October 3<sup>rd</sup>. 2021 PLC, ARC-CO, and ARC-IC payment processing for crops that have triggered for payments will begin on October 5<sup>th</sup>. Most CRP contracts approved in 2010 and later will have payments processed starting on October 11<sup>th</sup>. Each payment must be reviewed by FSA staff for accuracy. County Offices do their best to get payments out timely, but with the high volume of payments being processed during this time the process can still take 1-3 weeks. Payments are direct deposited for most producers, and deposits should be seen in your bank accounts 2-3 days after being signed by FSA staff. Paper transaction statements with data about your payments will be mailed to you following processing. If you have not received your payments by the beginning of November, please contact your local office to see if we are missing any required paperwork from your farming operation.

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## FSA hiring multiple positions that close soon

### Spokane County – Farm Loan Officer Trainee

The Farm Service Agency office located in Spokane Valley, WA is accepting applications for a Farm Loan Officer Trainee position. This is a paid position that offers 2-year classroom and on-the-job training to develop competencies required to be a successful Farm Loan Officer (FLO). The full vacancy announcement which includes qualifications, eligibility requirements, and closing date will be posted on USA Jobs at [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov) around October 18. This position is offered under the Pathways program and is focused to recent graduates.

### Location TBD – County Executive Director Trainee

Farm Service Agency has announced a Full-Time County Executive Director Trainee (CEDT) 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 (CED). The training does require extensive paid travel and may require relocation once completed. The full vacancy announcement which includes qualifications, eligibility requirements, and closing date are posted on USA Jobs at [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov). This position closes October 6, 2022.

### Walla Walla County - Program Technician

The Farm Service Agency office located in Walla Walla, 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, eligibility requirements, and closing date are posted on USA Jobs at [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov). This position closes October 4, 2022.

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## USDA Hiring for a Temporary Program Technician Positions in Various Locations

Washington State Farm Service Agency (FSA) is hiring a full time, Temporary Program Technician (PT), positions in **Chelan County, Franklin County, Grant County, Skagit County, Spokane County, Walla Walla County, and Yakima County**.

Duties include general office activities supporting FSA programs administered at the field level. Successful applicants must be reliable, have a professional attitude, enjoy working with the public. The Spokane position will require a valid driver's license for day travel to local offices in Lincoln, Adams, and Whitman counties. The salary range is \$32,283 to \$51,834 per year.

Applicant closing dates will vary by location. If you are interested or know of someone who might be interested, please share this information with them. To apply please submit a copy of your resume to the following. You may also contact the number listed for specific questions regarding the position:

- Chelan County [stokes@usda.gov](mailto:stokes@usda.gov) 509-745-3005
- Grant County [jensvold@usda.gov](mailto:jensvold@usda.gov) 509-717-3247
- Franklin County [clatterbuck@usda.gov](mailto:clatterbuck@usda.gov) 509-416-5703
- Skagit County [chamberlain@usda.gov](mailto:chamberlain@usda.gov) 360-488-4814
- Spokane County [martin@usda.gov](mailto:martin@usda.gov) 509-323-3036
- Walla Walla County [betts@usda.gov](mailto:betts@usda.gov) 509-956-3748
- Yakima County [delamora@usda.gov](mailto:delamora@usda.gov) and [jeremy.nelson@usda.gov](mailto:jeremy.nelson@usda.gov) 509-367-8540

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## FSA Youth Loans

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) makes operating loans of up to \$5,000 to eligible individual youths ages 10 to 20 to finance income-producing, agriculture-related projects. The project must be of modest size, educational and initiated, developed and carried out by youths participating in 4-H clubs, Future Farmers of America, tribal youth organizations or similar agricultural-affiliated groups. It must be planned and operated with the assistance of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience in agriculture-related skills.

To qualify for a loan, the applicant must comply with FSA's general eligibility requirements, and conduct a modest income-producing project in a supervised program of work.

These loans can finance many kinds of income-producing agricultural projects. Some examples include:

- Buy, raise and sell livestock
- Purchase inputs such as seed, fuel and fertilizer to raise and sell a crop
- Purchase or repair tools or equipment needed to support an eligible project
- Purchase breeding stock

To apply, the applicant must submit completed plans and budgets signed by the project advisor and parent or guardian along with the FSA application for loan assistance.

These loans:

- Have an aggregate maximum loan amount of \$5,000;
- Have a fixed interest rate that is determined at the time of closing (2.75% for April, 2022);

- Are secured with a promissory note, and by liens on the products produced for sale and on chattel property, including crops, livestock, equipment and fixtures purchased with loan funds; and
- Have a repayment schedule that varies depending on the type of project for which the loan is made.

For additional information on the Youth Loan program, or to submit an application, contact your local FSA office at <http://offices.usda.gov>.

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## Important Dates and Deadlines

**October 10, 2022** – Columbus Day. USDA service centers will be closed.

**October 31, 2022** – Deadline to apply for the Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP). Cost share funds available for organic certification expenses paid from October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022.

**November 1, 2022** – County Committee election ballots mailed to eligible voters.

**November 11, 2022** – Veterans Day. USDA service centers will be closed.

**November 20, 2022** – Deadline to obtain 2022 crop year NAP coverage for asparagus, berries, grapes, honey, hops, tree fruits, nuts, and other perennial crops not listed under the 9/30 category.

**November 24, 2022** – Thanksgiving Day. USDA service centers will be closed.

**December 5, 2022** – County Committee ballots are due to FSA county offices or postmarked by this date.

**December 15, 2022** – 2022 crop acreage reporting deadline for fall seeded crops. This includes fall planted alfalfa, canola, lentils, mint, onions, peas, and small grains.

**December 15, 2022** - Deadline to report actual harvested production of 2022 NAP covered fall-seeded crops, including fall canola, fall mint, fall peas, fall lentils, fall seeded small grains.

**December 31, 2022** - Deadline to obtain 2022 crop year NAP coverage for honey.

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State Committee

Jon Wyss  
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Brett Blankenship, Member  
Jackie Richter, Member  
Jose Ramirez, Member

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