

May 2020



Farm Service Agency Electronic News Service

NEWSLETTER

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Wisconsin FSA Newsletter

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A Message from the SED

Signup for the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program began on Tuesday, and FSA employees are hard at work answering questions and approving applications and payments. This assistance is desperately needed, and we are doing everything we can to make this a quick process for you. Have your inventory, sales, or production information pulled together before your appointment to shorten the timeline. Program details and an online application tool are available at farmers.gov/cfap. More information is in the article below.

CFAP is not a first come, first served program. The entire program was structured to ensure that everyone who applies receives a payment. Producers will receive 80 percent of their maximum total payment upon approval of the application. The remaining portion of the payment will be paid later this summer as funds remain available.

FSA employees are available by phone, email, and virtual meeting to help you through the application process. We look forward to it.

Sandy Chalmers

Dates to Remember

May 26, 2020: Signup for [Coronavirus Food Assistance Program \(CFAP\)](#) began

May 31, 2020: Last day to obtain a [Marketing Assistance Loan](#) on 2019 coarse grain crops

June 30, 2020: Deadline to enroll in 2020 Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) Program

July 15, 2020: Deadline to complete [acreage report](#) for all spring-seeded crops; including dry edible beans, dark and light red kidney beans, perennial forage, pasture, rangeland, forage seeding, and all CRP acreage

August 15, 2020: Deadline to complete [acreage report](#) for all processing snap beans and cabbage

August 28, 2020: Deadline to submit application for [Coronavirus Food Assistance Program](#) (CFAP)

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Farmers and Ranchers in Wisconsin Can Now Apply for Financial Assistance through USDA's Coronavirus Food Assistance Program

Agricultural producers can now apply for USDA's Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP), which provides direct payments to offset impacts from the coronavirus pandemic. The application and a payment calculator are now available online, and USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) staff members are available via phone, fax and online tools to help producers complete applications. The agency set up a call center in order to simplify how they serve new customers across the nation.

Applications will be accepted through August 28, 2020. Through CFAP, USDA is making available \$16 billion for vital financial assistance to producers of agricultural commodities who have suffered a five-percent-or-greater price decline due to COVID-19 and face additional significant marketing costs as a result of lower demand, surplus production, and disruptions to shipping patterns and the orderly marketing of commodities.

We also want to remind producers that the program is structured to ensure the availability of funding for all eligible producers who apply.

In order to do this, producers will receive 80 percent of their maximum total payment upon approval of the application. The remaining portion of the payment, not to exceed the payment limit, will be paid at a later date nationwide, as funds remain available.

Producers can download the CFAP application and other eligibility forms from farmers.gov/cfap. Also, on that webpage, producers can find a payment calculator to help identify sales and inventory records needed to apply and calculate potential payments.

Applying for Assistance

Producers of all eligible commodities will apply through their local FSA office. Those who use the online calculator tool will be able to print off a pre-filled CFAP application, sign, and submit to your local FSA office either electronically or via hand delivery. Please contact your local office to determine the preferred method. Find contact information for your local office at farmers.gov/cfap.

Documentation to support the producer's application and certification may be requested after the application is filed. FSA has streamlined the signup process to not require an acreage report at the time of application and a USDA farm number may not be immediately needed.

Farmers and Ranchers in Wisconsin Can Now Apply for Financial Assistance through USDA's Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (continued)

Additional Commodities

USDA is also establishing a process for the public to identify additional commodities for potential inclusion in CFAP. Specifically, USDA is looking for data on agricultural commodities, that are not currently eligible for CFAP, that the public believes to have either:

1. suffered a five percent-or-greater price decline between mid-January and mid-April as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic,
2. shipped but subsequently spoiled due to loss of marketing channel, or
3. not left the farm or remained unharvested as mature crops.

More information about this process is available on farmers.gov/cfap.

More Information

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

USDA Service Centers are open for business by phone appointment 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.

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FSA Implements Set-Aside Loan Provision for Customers Impacted by COVID-19

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) will broaden the use of the Disaster Set-Aside (DSA) loan provision, normally used in the wake of natural disasters, to allow farmers with USDA farm loans who are affected by COVID-19, and are determined eligible, to have their next payment set aside. In some cases, FSA may also set aside a second payment for farmers who have already had one payment set aside because of a prior designated disaster.

FSA direct loan borrowers will receive a letter with the details of the expanded Disaster Set-Aside authorities, which includes the possible set-aside of annual operating loans, as well as explanations of the additional loan servicing options that are available. To discuss or request a loan payment Set-Aside, borrowers should call or email the farm loan staff at their local FSA county office.

The set-aside payment's due date is moved to the final maturity date of the loan or extended up to twelve months in the case of an annual operating loan. Any principal set-aside will continue to accrue interest until it is repaid. This aims to improve the borrower's cashflow in the current production cycle.

FSA previously announced it was relaxing the loan-making process and adding flexibilities for servicing direct and guaranteed loans to provide credit to producers in need. Direct loan applicants and borrowers are encouraged to contact their local FSA county office to discuss loan making and servicing flexibilities and other needs or concerns. Customers participating in FSA's guaranteed loan programs are encouraged to contact their lender. Information on these flexibilities, and office contact information, can be found on farmers.gov/coronavirus.

FSA Implements Set-Aside Loan Provision for Customers Impacted by COVID-19 (continued)

FSA will be accepting most forms and applications by facsimile or electronic signature. Some services are also available online to customers with an eAuth account, which provides access to the farmers.gov portal where producers can view USDA farm loan information and certain program applications and payments. Customers can track payments, report completed practices, request conservation assistance and electronically sign documents. Customers who do not already have an eAuth account can enroll at farmers.gov/sign-in.

USDA Service Centers are open for business by phone appointment 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.

FSA Makes Changes to Farm Loan, Disaster, Conservation and Safety Net Programs to Make it Easier for Customers to Conduct Business

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) county offices are open in Wisconsin by phone appointment only until further notice, and FSA staff are available to continue helping agricultural producers with program signups, loan servicing and other important actions. Additionally, FSA is relaxing the loan-making process and adding flexibilities for servicing direct and guaranteed loans to provide credit to producers in need.

FSA Service Centers are open for business by phone appointment only. While our program delivery staff will continue to come into the office, they will be working with our agricultural producers by phone and using email and online tools whenever possible.

FSA is delivering programs and services, including:

- Farm loans;
- Commodity loans;
- Farm Storage Facility Loan program;
- Disaster assistance programs, including signup for the Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program Plus (this includes producers now eligible because of losses due to drought and excess moisture in 2018 and 2019);
- Safety net programs, including 2020 signup for the Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage programs;
- Conservation programs; and
- Acreage reports.

FSA is relaxing the loan making process and adding flexibilities for servicing direct and guaranteed loans to provide credit to producers in need. For a full list of flexibilities, visit farmers.gov/coronavirus.

Contacting FSA FSA will be accepting additional forms and applications by facsimile or electronic signature. Some services are also available online to customers with an eAuth account, which provides access to the farmers.gov portal where producers can view USDA farm loan information and payments and view and track certain USDA program applications and payments. Customers can track payments, report completed practices, request conservation assistance and electronically sign documents. Customers who do not already have an eAuth account can enroll at farmers.gov/sign-in.

FSA encourages producers to contact their county office to discuss these programs and any current, and future, temporary changes to farm loan deadlines and the loan servicing options available. For Service Center contact information, visit farmers.gov/coronavirus.

USDA Offers Individuals Options to Complete Business Online

Farmers, ranchers, and agricultural producers have online options to access U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs, including Farm Service Agency's Agriculture Risk Coverage/Price Loss Coverage (ARC/PLC), Loan Deficiency Payments (LDPs), producer farm data such as Common Land Unit data through [FSAfarm+](#), farm loan, WHIP, and WHIP+ information through the [farmers.gov portal](#), and conservation program and practice information through the Natural Resources Conservation Service's [Conservation Client Gateway](#). Online options are available to users with a secure Level 2 eAuthentication ID.

Through the [FSA website](#), you can:

- Request Loan Deficiency Payments through eLDP;
- Choose a payment option, assign crop shares, and sign and submit ARC/PLC contracts online, as well as view and print submitted contracts;
- View your FSA data on FSAfarm+, including farm records data and maps.

Through the [farmers.gov portal](#), you can:

- View farm loans information, history, and payments for USDA farm loans;
- Prepare to enroll in the 2017 Wildfires and Hurricanes Indemnity Program (WHIP), and track your application;
- Prepare to enroll in the Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program Plus (WHIP+) which helps agricultural producers affected by natural disasters in 2018 and 2019.

Through the NRCS [Conservation Client Gateway](#), you can:

- Track NRCS payments;
- Report completed practices;
- Request conservation assistance, and
- Electronically sign documents.

The functionalities of FSAfarm+ and Conservation Client Gateway are being transitioned to [farmers.gov](#), a dynamic, mobile-friendly public website combined with an authenticated portal where customers can apply for programs, process transactions, and manage accounts.

But for now, the portals must be accessed individually depending on the service.

Producers doing business as an individual with these agencies first need to sign up for the Level 2 eAuthentication access. Currently USDA eAuthentication does not have the mechanism to issue accounts to businesses, corporations, other entities or for anyone acting on behalf of another individual or entity.

Users with a secure Level 2 eAuthentication ID linked to their USDA customer record can apply for select USDA programs, view and print farm maps and farm records data. Enrolling is easy!

1. Contact your local service center to confirm you have a USDA customer record with a primary email address. Use our [Service Center Locator](#) to find your local office.
2. Navigate to the [eAuth Account Registration page](#).
3. Select "Customer" on the registration page.
4. Enter your primary email address, which should match what USDA has on your customer record. You will receive an email from eAuth asking you to confirm your email address. Click the "Continue Registration" link in this email to continue the registration process. *Note: When you log in, your User ID will be your email address.*
5. Next, enter your name and set a password.
6. Finally, you will need to verify your identity. You will be taken to a page where you will need to provide information such as your date of birth and residential address, and then can verify your identity online. If you are unable to verify your identity online, contact your local USDA Service Center. For technical assistance, call the eAuthentication help desk at 1-800-457-3642.

Wisconsin Producers Reminded to Complete Crop Acreage Reports

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices in Wisconsin are currently open to phone and virtual appointments only but can still work with producers on timely filing crop acreage reports. FSA staff can provide assistance over the phone, by email and through virtual meetings via Microsoft Teams.

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable in State:

July 15, 2020: All spring-seeded crops; including dry edible beans, dark and light red kidney beans, perennial forage, pasture, rangeland, forage seeding, and all CRP acreage

August 15, 2020: Processing snap beans, cabbage

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers must file an accurate crop acreage report by the applicable deadline. FSA staff is still able to assist producers in completing acreage reports, including providing maps.

FSA county offices in Wisconsin will provide maps to producers through mail or email with instructions for completing the maps. After planting is complete, producers should return completed maps and the acreage reporting sheet to their [local office](#).

FSA 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 phones and call the FSA office for an appointment. You can also use Microsoft Teams from your personal computer without downloading software.

After completed maps and all acreage reporting information is received, FSA will make software updates and mail or email producers the completed *Report of Acreage* form (FSA-578) to sign. Producers must return the signed form certifying their acreage report to the FSA office through mail or email by July 15, 2020.

The following exceptions apply to acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.
- If a producer acquires additional acreage after the acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office. Producers should also report crop acreage they intended to plant, but due to natural disaster, were unable to plant. Prevented planting acreage must be reported on form CCC-576, Notice of Loss, no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date as established by FSA and USDA's Risk Management Agency.

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.

If you have applied for organic certification and do not receive it before the acreage reporting deadline, you may provide the necessary documentation to FSA immediately upon receipt from the certifying agent.

For questions, please contact your local FSA office. To locate your local FSA office visit farmers.gov/service-center-locator.

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USDA Continues Conservation Planning and Programs for America's Farmers and Ranchers- NRCS Services Available by Phone Appointment Only

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) field offices are open by phone appointment only until further notice, and NRCS staff are available to continue to provide one-on-one, customer-specific advice to producers to help them meet their unique conservation and business goals.

All USDA Service Centers, including those NRCS field offices, are not currently accessible to customers in person.

NRCS staff are working with customers through phone, mail and online communications, and field work continues with appropriate social distancing to help producers with conservation planning and financial assistance through Farm Bill programs.

NRCS offers year-round continuous signup for its Farm Bill programs such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Conservation Stewardship Program and the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program. Call respective NRCS field offices about sign up and application submission options.

Additionally, NRCS continues projects with partners, including universities, local and state governments, tribes, nonprofits, and others. NRCS will continue to award projects and to call for proposals for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program, Conservation Innovation Grants and the Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program.

Online services are available to customers with an eAuth account, which provides access to the farmers.gov portal where producers can view USDA farm loan information and payments and view and track certain USDA program applications and payments. Customers who do not already have an eAuth account can enroll at farmers.gov/sign-in. Online NRCS services are available to customers through the [Conservation Client Gateway link](#) which can be found at www.nrcs.usda.gov. Customers can track payments, report completed practices, request conservation assistance and electronically sign documents.

For the most current updates on available services and Service Center contact information, visit farmers.gov/coronavirus.

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USDA Adds Flexibilities for Crop Insurance to Support America's Farmers and Ranchers

USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) is authorizing additional flexibilities due to coronavirus while continuing to support producers, working through Approved Insurance Providers (AIPs) to deliver services, including processing policies, claims and agreements. These flexibilities include: enabling producers to send notifications and reports electronically, extending the date for production reports and providing additional time and deferring interest on premium and other payments.

Electronic Notifications Allowed for Required Reports

Producers may send notifications and reports electronically for written agreement issues, acreage and production reporting and upcoming sales closing dates (deadlines to buy crop insurance). Notice of the policyholder's election may be provided over the phone with appropriate documentation of the call or using electronic methods followed by their confirmation of such election in writing (a signed, or e-signed, form) no later than July 15, 2020.

Production Reporting Date Extended

For the 2020 crop year, AIPs may accept production reports through the earlier of the acreage reporting date (ARD) or 30 days after the production reporting date (PRD) for crops insured under the Common Crop Insurance Policy Basic Provisions with a PRD of March 15, 2020, or later. Generally, the PRD for crops insured under the Common Crop Insurance Policy Basic Provisions is the earlier of the ARD or 45 days after

USDA Adds Flexibilities for Crop Insurance to Support America's Farmers and Ranchers (continued)

Additional Time Given and Interest Deferred on Premium Payments, Written Payment Agreements

AIPs are authorized to provide additional time for policyholders to make payment of premium and administrative fees. Interest accrual on premium payments and administrative fees will be waived to the earliest of an additional 60 days from the scheduled payment due date or the termination date on policies with premium billing dates between March 1, 2020, and April 30, 2020. AIPs are also authorized to provide additional time for policyholders to make payment for Written Payment Agreements due between March 1, 2020, and April 30, 2020. Payments may be extended up to 60 days from the scheduled payment due date and considered a timely payment.

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, visit farmers.gov/coronavirus.

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May Interest Rates

[Click here to find notification of current FSFL and commodity loan interest rates](#)

[Click here to view current Farm Loan interest rates](#)

Farm Loan Interest Rates	May 2020
Farm Operating- Direct	1.375%
Farm Operating- Microloan	1.375%
Farm Ownership- Direct	2.250%
Farm Ownership- Microloan	2.250%
Farm Ownership- Direct, Joint Financing	2.500%
Farm Ownership- Down Payment	1.500%
Emergency Loan- Amount of Actual Loss	2.375%

Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL)	May 2020
3-year FSFL	0.250%
5-year FSFL	0.375%
7-year FSFL	0.625%
10-year FSFL	0.750%
12-year FSFL	0.750%

9-Month Commodity Loans	May 2020
Marketing Assistance Loan	1.125%

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).