#### **July 2020**





### Farm Service Agency Electronic News Service

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### **Washington State FSA Newsletter**

### Washington State Farm Service Agency

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

# **Coronavirus Food Assistance Program** (CFAP)

CFAP provides benefits for certain crops and livestock types to help offset the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Eligible commodities and potential payments are listed below. The deadline to apply is August 28, 2020.

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

- Non-specialty Crops: barley (malting only), canola, corn, millet, oats, soybeans, sorghum, sunflowers, wheat (durum and hard red spring only)
  - Payments are based on the lesser of the producer's unsold production on Jan 15, 2020 or 50% of their total 2019 production.
- Wool: clean basis or greasy basis
  - Payments are based on the lesser of the producer's unsold production on Jan 15, 2020 or 50% of their total 2019 production.
- Livestock: cattle, hogs, and sheep (lambs and yearlings only)
  - Payments are based on (1) livestock owned on Jan 15 that were sold Jan 15-Apr 15 and (2) producer's highest livestock inventory Apr 16-May 14.
- Dairy (milk):
  - Payments are based on the pounds of milk produced, including dumped milk, during Jan 1-Mar 31, 2020.
- Specialty crops: almonds, apples, asparagus, beans (green), blueberries, broccoli, cabbage, cantaloupe, carrots, cauliflower, celery, corn (sweet), cucumbers, eggplant, garlic, lettuce (iceberg & romaine), mushrooms, onions (dry & green), peaches, pears, peppers, potatoes, raspberries, rhubarb, spinach, squash, strawberries, tomatoes, walnuts, watermelons
  - Payments are based on (1) production sold Jan 15-Apr 15 (not all crops currently eligible), (2) production that was shipped but was not paid Jan 15-Apr 15 and payment will never be received, and (3) production not shipped off the farm and spoiled, destroyed or donated Jan 15-Apr 15
  - A number of specialty crops including apples, asparagus, blueberries, potatoes and raspberries currently do not have a payment rate for the (1) category above. If that changes as a result of the NOFA process (below) payment could then be earned on eligible production.

In most cases the production must have been subject to "price risk" to be eligible for benefits. Price risk means the commodity was not subject to an agreed-upon future price through a forward contract or similar contract or agreement.

Payment rates for the commodities above can be found at <a href="https://www.farmers.gov/cfap">https://www.farmers.gov/cfap</a>. Click on the box for the category (i.e., Non-Specialty Crops) then click on the link in the dropdown and scroll down to the commodity breakdown and payment rates. In most cases there are two potential payments, one funded by the CARES Act and one funded by CCC (USDA) funding.

For commodities not listed above, and for specialty crops that currently do not earn a payment in category 1 (also referred to as bucket 1) CFAP provided a NOFA (notice of funds availability)

process for commodity groups and producers to submit data and arguments in support additional crops or payments. The final day to submit comments through the NOFA process was June 22, 2020. The comment period is now closed, and USDA will announce any changes in eligible commodities/payments for CFAP in the coming weeks.

In addition to the CFAP application, producers need to submit several eligibility documents. Those forms are described in the article below. If you have already submitted these documents for participation in other FSA or programs, new forms are not required. Your local <u>county office</u> can assist you in completing the eligibility forms as well as the CFAP application. If not already on file, your eligibility documents must be completed and submitted within 60 days of submitting your application for you to remain eligible.

## ATTENTION: DEADLINE TO SUBMIT ELIGIBILITY DOCUMENTS FOR CFAP

Signup for the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) began on May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and runs through August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020. While the program has been designed to provide a streamlined application process to allow relief payments to be issued quickly, producers may be required to submit additional eligibility documentation before a payment can be issued. Required eligibility documents include:

- CCC-902 Farm Operating Plan
- CCC-901 Member Information (if applicable)
- CCC-941 Adjusted Gross Income Certification and Consent to Disclosure of Tax Information
- CCC-942 Certification of Income from Farming, Ranching, and Forestry Operations (if applicable)
- AD-1026 Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELC) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification

All applicants must submit all eligibility documents **within 60 calendar days** of signing a CFAP application. Failure to timely provide all eligibility forms may result in no payment being issued or a reduced payment.

Forms and questions regarding submission of eligibility documentation for CFAP should be directed to your local FSA office or they can be obtained and answered on our website at <a href="https://www.farmers.gov/cfap">https://www.farmers.gov/cfap</a>. While USDA Service Centers still remain closed at this time to the public, your local county staff are still hard at work and available to assist in completion of all aspects of the application process and to answer any questions that may arise in the process.

# **USDA Adds Digital Options for Farmers and Ranchers to Apply for Coronavirus Food Assistance Program**

USDA's Farm Service Agency will now accept applications for the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) through an online portal, expanding the options available to producers to apply for this program, which helps offset price declines and additional marketing costs because of the coronavirus pandemic. FSA is also leveraging commercial document storage and e-signature solutions to enable producers to work with local service center staff to complete their applications from home.

Through the portal, producers with secure USDA login credentials—known as eAuthentication—can certify eligible commodities online, digitally sign applications and submit directly to the local USDA Service Center. Producers who do not have an eAuthentication account can learn more and begin the enrollment process at <a href="mailto:farmers.gov/sign-in">farmers.gov/sign-in</a>. Currently, the digital application is only available to sole proprietors or single-member business entities.

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 service centers when calling to discuss the CFAP application process. You can learn more about these solutions at <a href="mailto:farmers.gov/mydocs">farmers.gov/mydocs</a>.

USDA has several other options for producers to complete and submit their CFAP applications. These include:

- Downloading the AD-3114 application form from 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.
- Completing the application form using our <u>CFAP Application Generator and Payment Calculator</u> found at <u>gov/cfap</u>. 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, and then signed and submitted to their local USDA Service Center.

#### **Getting Help from FSA**

New customers seeking one-on-one support with the CFAP 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 at their local USDA Service Center.

All other eligibility forms, such as those related to adjusted gross income and payment information, can be downloaded from <a href="mailto:farmers.gov/cfap">farmers.gov/cfap</a>. For existing FSA customers, these documents are likely already on file.

Producers self-certify their records when applying for CFAP, and that documentation is not submitted with the application. However, producers may be asked for their documentation to

support the certification of eligible commodities, so they should retain the information used to complete their application.

#### More Information

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

### **Timely filing your Acreage Report**

July 15<sup>th</sup> is the final acreage reporting date for Washington grown crops. Failure to provide a timely filed acreage report can result in the loss of or greatly delay FSA's ability to provide timely program benefits.

Changes in the 2018 Farm Bill requires all CRP contracts to annually report conservation acreage. If you are a CRP contract holder, to prevent loss of benefits, you need to work with your farm operator to ensure CRP program acreage is reported before the July 15<sup>th</sup> deadline.

Livestock producer, with recent designations of drought conditions throughout central WA, Livestock Feed Program participants are required to have a timely file acreage report on file. Even if you file your application for LFP benefits after July 15<sup>th</sup>, you must have a timely filed acreage report on file before you can earn benefits. If you graze land subject to an AUM lease, you will need to provide a copy of that lease outlining the grazing limits of the lease as this information is recorded as a part of your acreage report.

Producers of spring planted crops and perennial forage crops; you too must have your crops acreages timely report. ARC/PLC program benefits require that all cropland on the farm must be timely reported for program benefits to be earned.

When reporting your crops, you must provide the type and/or variety that was planted, along with the use intended at the time of planting. Your end use of a crop can change during the growing season, but you should report the use that was intended at planting. For example, you may have planted spring barley with intentions to harvest a grain crop. This is would be your reported crop. Due to drought conditions and the need for additional forage, you elect to harvest the crop for hay. If you harvest the hay prior to July 15<sup>th</sup>, you can also report the end use at the time of reporting. You will also need to provide the planting date for the crop.

Producers with insured crops with Federal Crop, you are also required to timely file your acreage with your agent. Although acreage data is being shared as a compliance tool between the two agencies, certification signatures are required by both agencies.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, FSA is conducting business through on-line virtual meetings because currently we are unable to have face to face meetings with our producer. FSA is also able to provide a secure method for which producers can receive, review, and electronically sign FSA documents. Please contact your local FSA office and make an appointment to timely file you required acreage reports prior to the July 15<sup>th</sup> deadline.

### Report Damage or Loss of NAP Covered Crops Immediately

Excessive rain, hailstorms, drought, oh my! Untimely weather events can be unpredictable and harmful to crops. If weather events cause damage to or loss of your NAP covered crops, remember

that you must report this to your local FSA county office timely in order to be eligible for a NAP benefit.

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 <u>earlier</u> 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.

Producers of hand-harvested crops and crops that rapidly deteriorate must notify FSA within 72 hours of when a loss becomes apparent in order to be considered timely.

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. If the loss event is approved, remember to provide your crop production to your local FSA county office within 60 days after harvest or, if the crop won't be harvested, request an appraisal immediately so that the payment portion of form CCC-576 can be filed timely.

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 <u>local county FSA office</u> for more information.

### **Re-Enrolling Expiring Continuous CRP Contracts**

If you have a continuous CRP or CREP contract that expires September 30, 2020, and you wish to re-enroll it in a new contract that starts October 1, the deadline to submit the completed offer is August 21. However, you need to start this process before that deadline to allow FSA time to generate the offer for your signature. If you do not submit a signed offer to re-enroll by August 21, the land will become ineligible for continuous CRP/CREP.

Working on CRP During the April 1 – July 1 Primary Nesting Season (PNS)

As most CRP participants know, they generally cannot disturb their CRP during the PNS to limit disruptions to nesting birds and other wildlife. But there are a few important exceptions.

Participants must control weeds on their CRP. Failure to do so can result in a contract violation, payments reductions and potentially contract termination with refunds. If you have an established cover on your CRP (generally 2-3 years after seeding), and you need to address weeds, contact your local FSA office for guidance. For example, the office may be able to authorize you to do "spot treatments" to complete weed control activities during the PNS.

If you are in the process of establishing the CRP cover, the PNS restrictions do not apply. During seedbed preparation, seeding and post-plant weed control, producers can work on the CRP land inside or outside the PNS. Failure to establish the required CRP cover can be a contract violation, so please take any necessary actions in a timely manner during establishment, even if it must be done April 1 – July 1.

#### **CRP Haying and Grazing**

As you may know, emergency haying and grazing of CRP can sometimes be approved during periods of significant drought. The Farm Bill provides that when a county reaches D2 on the <u>US Drought Monitor</u>, the FSA State Committee can authorize emergency haying or grazing once the primary nesting season ends on July 1. FSA is monitoring the situation and will announce shortly after July 1 if any counties will be approved for emergency haying or grazing.

Counties that currently have at least a portion of the county at D2 on the Drought Monitor are Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Franklin, Grant, Kittitas, Klickitat, Okanogan, Walla Walla and Yakima.

If haying and grazing are approved, you will need to submit an application to FSA and work with NRCS to obtain a conservation plan that complies with farm bill provisions for emergency haying or grazing. You can initiate that process now, but FSA cannot approve the request until after July 1. Haying or grazing cannot begin until you are approved by FSA.

#### **2020 Wool Triggers Loan Deficiency Payments**

Wool producers may be eligible for Loan Deficiency Payments (LDP) through the Farm Service Agency. LDPs are direct payments made in lieu of a marketing assistance loan when the Commodity Credit Corporation determined value, based on the current local price, is below the applicable loan rate. For wool, 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. Wool LDP rates are updated on a weekly basis and can be found online here.

For a commodity to be eligible for an LDP, the producer must have beneficial interest in the commodity, defined as having title, possession, and control of the commodity, and responsible for loss of or damage to the commodity. All related application forms must be completed at the local FSA office prior to loss of beneficial interest. Additional eligibility requirements must be met before an LDP payment can be paid. This includes a 2020 FSA-578 acreage report for all crop acres, a CCC-941 Adjusted Gross Income Certification, a CCC-902 Farm Operating Plan, an AD-1026 Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Certification, and a direct deposit form or waiver.

In order to request an LDP for wool, producers must complete a CCC-633 EZ Loan Deficiency Payment Agreement and Request form. Page 1 is the agreement which signifies an intent to request an LDP and must be completed before a producer loses beneficial interest of the eligible commodity. Page 4 is the wool request for LDP benefits and must be submitted after page 1 is completed. Once signed and approved, page 4 cannot be cancelled and payments cannot be deferred. Payments are processed after page 4 has been submitted and approved.

For more information on LDPs, visit <a href="https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/price-support/Index">https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/price-support/Index</a> or visit your local FSA office. To locate your local FSA office, visit farmers.gov/service-locator.

#### **Marketing Assistance Loan Maturity Extended to 12 Months**

Agricultural producers now have more time to repay Marketing Assistance Loans (MAL) as part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's implementation of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020. From now until September 30, 2020, nonrecourse commodity loans in good standing will mature 12 months after loan approval instead of at nine months.

Effective immediately, producers of eligible commodities now have up to 12 months to repay their commodity loans. The maturity extension applies to nonrecourse loans for crop years 2018, 2019, and 2020. Eligible open loans must in good standing with a maturity date of March 31, 2020 or later. All new nonrecourse loans requested by September 30, 2020 will have a maturity date 12 months following the date of approval. Loans requested after September 30 will have a term of nine months.

The maturity extension for current, active loans will be automatically extended an additional 3 months. Loans that were disbursed before April 30, 2020 have already been automatically extended. If you have a commodity loan and prefer a nine-month maturity date, please contact your local county FSA office.

### 2021 DMC Signup to Begin October 12

Washington State dairy operators should mark their calendars. The Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) safety-net signup for 2021 coverage will **begin October 12 and will run through December 11**, **2020**. DMC has already triggered payments for two months for producers who signed up for 2020 coverage. As October approaches, be prepared to call your local FSA office for an appointment to sign up for 2021 DMC.

The April 2020 income over feed cost margin was \$6.03 per hundredweight (cwt.), triggering the second payment of 2020 for dairy producers who purchased the appropriate level of coverage under the <u>Dairy Margin Coverage</u> (DMC) program. The April margin reflects a more than a \$3 drop from the March \$9.15 cwt. income over feed cost margin. As of June 15, FSA has issued more than \$100 million in much-needed program benefits to dairy producers who purchased DMC coverage for 2020.

Authorized by the 2018 Farm Bill, DMC is a voluntary risk management program that offers protection to dairy producers when the difference between the all-milk price and the average feed price (the margin) falls below a certain dollar amount selected by the producer. Over 13,000 operations enrolled in the program for the 2020 calendar year.

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 the Farm Service Agency, 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 may also be required to wear a face covering during their appointment. Field work will continue with appropriate social distancing. Our program delivery staff will be in the office, and they will be working with our producers in office, by phone, and using online tools. More information can be found at farmers.gov/coronavirus.

For more information, visit <u>farmers.gov DMC webpage</u> or contact your local USDA service center. To locate your local FSA office, visit <u>farmers.gov/service-center-locator</u>.

## FONSI ISSUED FOR PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT ON TAP

The USDA Farm Service Agency issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) in relation to the Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) for implementation of the Tree Assistance Program (TAP) for Fire Blight, Little Cherry Disease and other diseases caused by X-disease Phytoplasma within Washington State on June 4, 2020.

As a result of this determination, applicants should expect to see a much quicker environmental review process when requesting assistance through the TAP for restoration due to the aforementioned diseases. This expedited review process will apply to all applications where ground disturbance will not exceed the previous level of disturbance and where the impacted area is at least 200 ft from a water body. If either of these provisions apply to an application, producers can expect a longer review process to allow FSA to conduct consultation(s) with applicable interested parties/regulatory agencies.

As a reminder, if producers intend to file an application for assistance under TAP with FSA, they cannot to take actions on diseased orchards until FSA has reviewed the details of the application and had a loss adjuster inspect the impacted orchard. This includes <u>all</u> components of the restoration of the orchard, such as spraying, ground disturbing activities and/or tree removal. Failure to obtain written approval prior to actions taking place may jeopardize their ability to participate in the program and/or receive payments. If an approved application area should change (e.g., applicant decides to move planting to a different location than originally planned and provided to FSA), it is the applicants responsibility to notify FSA immediately and **prior** to activities taking place.

Any questions regarding the Programmatic Environmental Assessment for TAP or the environmental review process should be directed to the State Environmental Coordinator, Stephanie Fisher — <a href="mailto:stephanie.fisher@usda.gov">stephanie.fisher@usda.gov</a> or 509-323-3002.

## IMPORTANT DEADLINE: PRODUCTION DUE FOR 2019 ARCIC FARMS

Producers who elected to participate in the 2019 ARC-IC program are required to provide their harvested yields for planted covered commodities for each year of the benchmark period (2013-

2017) and also for the 2019 crop year. The deadline to submit production evidence for the 2019 contract year is July 15, 2020.

Producers may submit production records by:

- Self-certification on the CCC-863 or previous certification on the CCC-658 for the ACRE program
- Commercial receipts, warehouse settlement sheets, load summaries, etc
- RMA production and yield data
- Measurement service or appraisal records

While yield certification will be accepted solely upon producer self-certification, producers are expected to be able to provide production records to FSA upon request from COC or in the event they are selected for review.

## LIVESTOCK FORAGE PROGRAM: SIGNUP AND AVAILABILITY

As drought conditions continue to persist throughout portions of our state, eligibility for one month's forage payment under the Livestock Forage Program (LFP) has been announced for the following counties: Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Franklin, Grant, Kittitas, Klickitat, Okanogan, Walla Walla, and Yakima.

LFP provides financial assistance to eligible livestock producers when producers suffer grazing losses due to drought conditions reaching an intensity level of D2 for 8 consecutive weeks, or a D3 or D4 for any given length of time. Payments are based upon intensity levels and the duration at which the drought remains at that intensity level.

Eligible livestock owners or contract growers must have risk in the livestock, and also provide the eligible grazing land physically located within an eligible county. This includes land that is owned or leased with the intent of grazing. All forage ground must be accounted for on the applicant's acreage report (FSA-578) and must be filed by the reporting deadline of July 15. Late filed acreage reports will be subject to late file fees and provisions.

All livestock producers within eligible counties wishing to file an application should contact their local FSA office to request an application. Producers must be prepared to provide documentation to support their LFP application. This includes inventory records for livestock, leases, grower contracts, etc.

# Farm Service Agency Accepting Nominations for County Committees June 15 through Aug. 1

The nomination period for USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees runs June 15 through Aug. 1, 2020, and elections will take place starting in November.

County committees are unique to FSA and serve as a direct link between agricultural communities across the country and USDA. For more information on FSA county committees, visit fsa.usda.gov/elections.

#### **Important Dates and Deadlines**

**June 15, 2020 –** The nomination period begins. Request nomination forms from your local USDA Service Center or download from this site

July 3, 2020 - Friday observance of Independence Day. USDA service centers will be closed.

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 program.

August 1, 2020 - County Committee election nominations due.

**August 1, 2020** – Last day to file nomination forms at the local USDA Service Center (Since Aug 1 falls on a weekend this year, nomination forms will be accepted through Aug 3, 2020).

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

August 28, 2020 - Deadline to apply for CFAP.

**August 31, 2020** – Deadline to obtain 2021 crop year NAP coverage for aquaculture; beets (for stecklings); cabbage (for seed or fresh); canola; carrots (for seed); cauliflower (for seed or fresh); Christmas trees; floriculture; mushrooms; onions (for seed, fresh, or processing); rapeseed; rutabaga (for seed or fresh); turf grass sod; turnips (for seed or fresh); and any other fall planted crops not mentioned in other closing dates.

September 7, 2020 – Labor Day. USDA service centers will be closed.

**September 30, 2020** – Deadline to obtain 2021 crop year NAP coverage for garlic; mint; biennial/perennial forages and mixed forages for hay, seed, or grazing.

**September 30, 2020** – Deadline to complete one-time option to update PLC yields on farms. Updated yields take effect beginning with the 2020 crop year.

**November 2, 2020** – Ballots mailed to eligible voters.

December 7, 2020 – Last day to return voted ballots to the USDA Service Center.

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

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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