



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

South Dakota USDA Newsletter - January 2023

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Message from the FSA State Director

Greetings from the South Dakota State FSA Office,

With all the challenges mother nature threw at South Dakota farm and ranch families during the spring and summer of 2022, the last two weeks of the year could not have been any worse. Parts of southcentral South Dakota got hit with more than three feet of snow, followed by strong winds and extreme cold temps. To top it off, the first week of January brought another round of snow. This time the southeastern part of the state got hammered with 2 feet of snow.

While we are glad to see we are getting much needed moisture to give our pastures and alfalfa a head start next spring, two to three feet at one time is not what we were hoping for.

The snow and extreme cold have impacted our state's livestock herds as well. We have received reports of cattle drifting upwards of 15 miles, walking right over fences buried in the rock-solid snow drifts.

If you are aware of a loss due to the adverse winter weather you should file a notice of loss under the Livestock Indemnity Program, with your local FSA office. This must be completed within 30 calendar days of when the loss is first apparent.

Producers also may be eligible for assistance for transporting feed stuffs under ELAP. Please check with your local FSA office about eligibility for your operation.

I want to take this opportunity to say thank you to Wayne Morgan from Spearfish for serving as the Chair of the South Dakota State FSA Committee from 2021 through 2022. Wayne is a retired FSA employee, who spent much of his FSA career working in the western part of the state. His insight on ranching issues was very valuable to the State FSA office. We wish the best to Wayne!

Wishing everyone a safe, healthy, and prosperous New Year!

Steve Dick
State Executive Director
USDA - Farm Service Agency

Message from the NRCS State Conservationist

Greetings,

Winter weather has arrived. I realize many livestock producers and others are affected by the severe winter weather that much of the state has experienced. The snow provides an opportunity for you to consider how properly placed shelterbelts or livestock shelters may address some of the concerns experienced this winter and visit your local Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office to discuss options. The [Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#) may be able to help with long-term support to help recover from natural disasters. Please reference the **USDA Offers Disaster Assistance for Producers Facing Inclement Weather** article below.

One of our partners, the [South Dakota Soil Health Coalition](#), is holding their annual [Soil Health Conference](#) January 24 and 25 in Sioux Falls in conjunction with the Midwest Cover Crops Annual Meeting.

Thank you to all South Dakota farmers, ranchers, and landowners who are moving the needle of conservation in our state.

Tony Sunseri
State Conservationist
USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service

South Dakota FSA introduces State Committee members. The first introduction is about Fanny

Brewer. Fanny and her family ranch near Dupree, SD.

As a third-generation rancher, Fanny Brewer is no stranger to the rewards and challenges the ranching life can hold. Brewer's love for agriculture started at a young age as she helped on her grandparent's ranch in Ziebach County. This is the same ranch she now lives on and operates with her husband and four children.

"I really do love agriculture," said Brewer, "I like the seasons. The different stages and the animals. They're peaceful."

Brewer graduated from Dickinson State University with an associate of applied science in Ag Business. She served as the Conservation District Manager in Ziebach County for 12 years. For eight of those years, she and her family handled the tree planting for the district. Currently she works with the Inter-Tribal Agricultural Council.

"It fits me," says Brewer, "I like meeting with producers and helping them with different programs. I am an agricultural geek."

As a new member to the State Committee (STC) Brewer is looking forward to bringing her real-world experience to the committee discussions. She feels it is important for there to be members who are currently running day to day farm and ranch operations in order to be in touch with current issues producers are facing in the state. When concerns are brought to the STC, Brewer wants to ensure the producer's perspective is heard and respected.

While Brewer is quick to admit she wasn't sure what her role would be as a STC member, she is eager to learn.

"It has already been really interesting, and I have learned a lot. Especially from the farm country part of our state."

Brewer recognizes the crop producers of our state deal with a different set of challenges than she has experienced as a rancher. As a STC member, she is determined to become aware of their unique situations so she can help make decisions based on the what the producer's experiences really are.

The reality of agriculture is something Brewer would like to bring to the STC and help to promote. She is concerned many people are becoming removed from agriculture and they are forgetting the reality of the farm and ranch lifestyle. Instead, their opinions of the industry are formed by television shows which are far from the reality of agricultural daily life. Brewer wants to relate to the producers of South Dakota.

"I just want to be fair."

When Brewer was asked to be a part of the STC she related it to the county committee. However, she recognizes the issues brought before the STC will likely cover a broader range of topics than what may be seen at the county level. When asked which she thought would be harder, Brewer said the County Committee (COC) would likely be more difficult to be a member of.

“I think the COC would be hard because you’re making decisions for the people you live around.”

While the world of agriculture is constantly changing Brewer does have some advice for beginning farmers just starting out.

“Be smart on your books, be good about keeping your books up to date. Always look for knowledge and enjoy what you’re doing.”

USDA Offers Disaster Assistance for Producers Facing Inclement Weather

Severe weather events create significant challenges and often result in catastrophic loss for agricultural producers. Despite every attempt to mitigate risk, your operation may suffer losses. USDA offers several programs to help with recovery.

Risk Management

For producers who have risk protection through [Federal Crop Insurance](#) or the [Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program](#) (NAP), we want to remind you to report crop damage to your crop insurance agent or the local Farm Service Agency (FSA) office.

If you have crop insurance, contact your agency within 72 hours of discovering damage and be sure to follow up in writing within 15 days. If you have NAP coverage, file a Notice of Loss (also called Form CCC-576) within 15 days of loss becoming apparent, except for hand-harvested crops, which should be reported within 72 hours.

Disaster Assistance

USDA also offers disaster assistance programs, which is especially important to livestock, fruit and vegetable, specialty and perennial crop producers who have fewer [risk management options](#).

First, the [Livestock Indemnity Program](#) (LIP) and [Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybee and Farm-raised Fish Program](#) (ELAP) reimburses producers for a portion of the value of livestock, poultry and other animals that died as a result of a qualifying natural disaster event or for loss of grazing acres, feed and forage. And, the [Livestock Forage Disaster Program](#) (LFP) provides assistance to producers of grazed forage crop acres that have suffered crop loss due to a qualifying drought. Livestock producers suffering the impacts of drought can also request [Emergency Haying and Grazing](#) on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres.

Next, the [Tree Assistance Program](#) (TAP) provides cost share assistance to rehabilitate and replant tree, vines or shrubs loss experienced by orchards and nurseries. This complements NAP or crop insurance coverage, which cover the crop but not the plants or trees in all cases.

For LIP and ELAP, you will need to file a Notice of Loss for livestock and grazing or feed losses within 30 days and honeybee losses within 15 days. For TAP, you will need to file a program application within 90 days.

Documentation

It's critical to keep accurate records to document all losses following this devastating cold weather event. Livestock producers are advised to document beginning livestock numbers by taking time and date-stamped video or pictures prior to after the loss.

Other common documentation options include:

- Purchase records
- Production records
- Vaccination records
- Bank or other loan documents
- Third-party certification

Other Programs

The [Emergency Conservation Program](#) and [Emergency Forest Restoration Program](#) can assist landowners and forest stewards with financial and technical assistance to restore damaged farmland or forests.

Additionally, FSA offers a variety of loans available including emergency loans that are triggered by disaster declarations and operating loans that can assist producers with credit needs. You can use these loans to replace essential property, purchase inputs like livestock, equipment, feed and seed, or refinance farm-related debts, and other needs.

Meanwhile, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides financial resources through its [Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#) to help with immediate needs and long-term support to help recover from natural disasters and conserve water resources. Assistance may also be available for emergency animal mortality disposal from natural disasters and other causes.

Additional Resources

Additional details – including payment calculations – can be found on our [NAP](#), [ELAP](#), [LIP](#), and [TAP](#) fact sheets. On farmers.gov, the [Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool](#), [Disaster-at-a-Glance fact sheet](#), and [Farm Loan Discovery Tool](#) can help you determine program or loan options.

While we never want to have to implement disaster programs, we are here to help. To file a Notice of Loss or to ask questions about available programs, contact your local USDA Service Center. All [USDA Service Centers](#) are open for business, including those that restrict in-person visits or require appointments because of the pandemic.

Disaster Assistance Available for Livestock Losses

The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) provides assistance to you for livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality caused by adverse weather, disease and attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the federal government or protected by federal law.

For disease losses, FSA county committees can accept veterinarian certifications that livestock deaths were directly related to adverse weather and unpreventable through good animal husbandry and management.

For 2022 livestock losses, you must file a notice within 30 calendar days of when the loss is first apparent. You then must provide the following supporting documentation to your local FSA office no later than 60 calendar days after the end of the calendar year in which the eligible loss condition occurred.

- Proof of death documentation
- Copy of grower's contracts
- Proof of normal mortality documentation

USDA has established normal mortality rates for each type and weight range of eligible livestock, i.e. Adult Beef Cow = 1.5% and Non-Adult Beef Cattle (less than 250 pounds) = 5%. These established percentages reflect losses that are considered expected or typical under "normal" conditions.

In addition to filing a notice of loss, you must also submit an application for payment by March 1, 2023.

For more information, contact your local USDA Service Center or visit fsa.usda.gov

Keeping Livestock Inventory Records

Livestock inventory records are necessary in the event of a natural disaster, so remember to keep them updated.

When disasters strike, the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) can help you if you've suffered excessive livestock death losses and grazing or feed losses due to eligible natural disasters.

To participate in livestock disaster assistance programs, you'll be required to provide verifiable documentation of death losses resulting from an eligible adverse weather event and must submit a notice of loss to your local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss of livestock is apparent. For grazing or feed losses, you must submit a notice of loss to your local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent and should maintain documentation and receipts.

You should record all pertinent information regarding livestock inventory records including:

- Documentation of the number, kind, type, and weight range of livestock
- Beginning inventory supported by birth recordings or purchase receipts.

For more information on documentation requirements, contact your local USDA Service Center or visit fsa.usda.gov.

FSA Offers Drought Assistance for Livestock Producers Through Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees and Farm-raised Fish Program (ELAP)

If you've suffered above normal expenses for hauling feed or water to livestock or hauling livestock to forage/grazing acres due to the impacts of drought, you may be eligible for

financial assistance through the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP).

For eligible producers in qualifying counties, ELAP provides financial assistance for:

- the transportation of water to livestock;
- the above normal cost of mileage for transporting feed to livestock,
- the above normal cost of transporting livestock to forage/grazing acres.*

**Hauling livestock one-way, one haul per animal reimbursement and no payment for “empty miles.”*

Eligible livestock include cattle, buffalo, goats and sheep, among others, that are maintained for commercial use and located in a county where the qualifying drought conditions occur. A county must have had D2 severe drought intensity on the U.S. Drought Monitor for eight consecutive weeks during the normal grazing period, or D3 or D4 drought intensity at any time during the normal grazing period. Producers must have risk in both eligible livestock and eligible grazing land in an eligible county to qualify for ELAP assistance.

WATER TRANSPORTATION

For ELAP water transportation assistance, a producer must be transporting water to eligible livestock on eligible grazing land where the producer had adequate livestock watering systems or facilities in place before the drought occurred and where they do not normally require the transportation of water. Payments are for costs associated with personal labor, equipment, hired labor, equipment, and/or contracted water transportation fees. Cost of the water itself is not covered. The ELAP payment formula uses a national average price per gallon.

ABOVE NORMAL COSTS OF TRANSPORTING FEED

ELAP provides financial assistance to livestock producers who incur above normal expenses for transporting feed to livestock during drought. The payment formula excludes the first 25 miles and any mileage over 1,000 miles. The reimbursement rate is 60% of the costs above what would normally have been incurred during the same time period in a normal (non-drought) year.

ABOVE NORMAL COSTS OF TRANSPORTING LIVESTOCK TO FORAGE/GRAZING ACRES

ELAP provides financial assistance to livestock producers who are hauling livestock to a new location for feed resources due to insufficient feed and/or grazing in drought-impacted areas. Assistance for Livestock transportation is retroactive to 2021 and available for 2022 and subsequent years. **Please contact your county FSA office for additional details.**

For calendar year 2022 forward, producers must submit a notice of loss to your local FSA office **within 30 calendar days** of when the loss is apparent; producers should contact their county FSA office as soon as the loss of water resources or feed resources are known. For ELAP eligibility, documentation of expenses is critical. Producers should maintain records and receipts associated with the costs of transporting water to eligible livestock, the costs of

transporting feed to eligible livestock, and the costs of transporting eligible livestock to forage/grazing acres.

ELAP also offers assistance to producers impacted by wildfire. Contact your county FSA office for more information on ELAP resources for wildfire losses. In addition, beekeepers also can benefit from ELAP provisions and should contact their county FSA office within 15 calendar days of when a loss occurs or from when the loss is apparent. For more information regarding ELAP, contact your local USDA Service Center or visit fsa.usda.gov/disaster.

2023 Dairy Margin Coverage Deadline Extended – Jan. 31, 2023, Last Day to Enroll

USDA extended the deadline for producers to enroll in [Dairy Margin Coverage \(DMC\)](#) and [Supplemental Dairy Margin Coverage \(SDMC\)](#) for program year 2023 to Jan. 31, 2023.

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.

Nearly 18,000 operations that enrolled in DMC for 2022 have received margin payments for August and September for a total of \$76.3 million. At \$0.15 per hundredweight for \$9.50 coverage, risk coverage through DMC is a relatively inexpensive investment.

DMC offers different levels of coverage, even an option that is free to producers, aside from a \$100 administrative fee. Limited resource, beginning, socially disadvantaged, and military veteran farmers and ranchers are exempt from paying the administrative fee, if requested. To determine the appropriate level of DMC coverage for a specific dairy operation, producers can use the online [dairy decision tool](#).

Supplemental DMC

Last year, USDA introduced Supplemental DMC, which provided \$42.8 million in payments to better help small- and mid-sized dairy operations that had increased production over the years but were not able to enroll the additional production. Supplemental DMC is also available for 2023. The enrollment period for 2023 Supplemental DMC is also extended to Jan. 31, 2023.

Supplemental DMC coverage is applicable to calendar years 2021, 2022 and 2023. Eligible dairy operations with less than 5 million pounds of established production history may enroll supplemental pounds.

For producers who enrolled in Supplemental DMC in 2022, the supplemental coverage will automatically be added to the 2023 DMC contract that previously established a supplemental production history.

Producers who did not enroll in Supplemental DMC in 2022 can do so now. Producers should complete their Supplemental DMC enrollment before enrolling in 2023 DMC. To enroll, producers will need to provide their 2019 actual milk marketings, which FSA uses to determine established production history.

DMC Payments

FSA will continue to calculate DMC payments using updated feed and premium hay costs, making the program more reflective of actual dairy producer expenses. These updated feed calculations use 100% premium alfalfa hay rather than 50%. For more information on DMC, visit the [DMC webpage](#) or contact your local [USDA Service Center](#).

USDA Announces Assistance for On-Farm Food Safety Expenses for Specialty Crop Growers

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) plans to provide up to \$200 million in assistance for specialty crop producers who incur eligible on-farm food safety program expenses to obtain or renew a food safety certification in calendar years 2022 or 2023. USDA's new [Food Safety Certification for Specialty Crops](#) (FSCSC) program will help to offset costs for specialty crop producers to comply with regulatory requirements and market-driven food safety certification requirements, which is part of USDA's broader effort to transform the food system to create a more level playing field for small and medium producers and a more balanced, equitable economy for everyone working in food and agriculture.

Specialty crop operations can apply for assistance for eligible expenses related to a 2022 food safety certificate issued on or after June 21, 2022, beginning June 27, 2022. USDA is delivering FSCSC to provide critical assistance for specialty crop operations, with an emphasis on equity in program delivery while building on lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and supply chain disruptions. Vilsack made the announcement from Hollis, N.H., where he toured a local, family-owned farm and highlighted USDA's efforts to help reduce costs for farmers and support local economies by providing significant funding to cut regulatory costs and increase market opportunities for farmers in New Hampshire and across the nation.

Program Details

FSCSC will assist specialty crop operations that incurred eligible on-farm food safety certification and related expenses related to obtaining or renewing a food safety certification in calendar years 2022 and 2023. For each year, FSCSC covers a percentage of the specialty crop operation's cost of obtaining or renewing their certification, as well as a portion of their related expenses.

To be eligible for FSCSC, the applicant must be a specialty crop operation; meet the definition of a small business or very small business; and have paid eligible expenses related to the 2022 (issued on or after June 21, 2022) or 2023 certification.

Specialty crop operations may receive assistance for the following costs:

- Developing a food safety plan for first-time food safety certification.
- Maintaining or updating an existing food safety plan.
- Food safety certification.
- Certification upload fees.
- Microbiological testing for products, soil amendments and water.
- Training.

FSCSC payments are calculated separately for each category of eligible costs. A higher payment rate has been set for socially disadvantaged, limited resource, beginning and veteran farmers and ranchers. Details about the payment rates and limitations can be found at farmers.gov/food-safety.

Applying for Assistance

The FSCSC application period for 2022 is June 27, 2022, through January 31, 2023, and the application period for 2023 will be announced at a later date. FSA will issue payments at the time of application approval for 2022 and after the application period ends for 2023. If calculated payments exceed the amount of available funding, payments will be prorated.

Interested specialty crop producers can apply by completing the FSA-888, Food Safety Certification for Specialty Crops Program (FSCSC) application. The application, along with other required documents, can be submitted to the FSA office at any USDA Service Center nationwide by mail, fax, hand delivery or via electronic means.

Producers can visit farmers.gov/food-safety for additional program details, eligibility information and forms needed to apply.

Applying for FSA Direct Loans

FSA offers direct farm ownership and direct farm operating loans to producers who want to establish, maintain, or strengthen their farm or ranch. Direct loans are processed, approved and serviced by FSA loan officers.

Direct farm operating loans can be used to purchase livestock and feed, farm equipment, fuel, farm chemicals, insurance, and other costs including family living expenses. Operating loans can also be used to finance minor improvements or repairs to buildings and to refinance some farm-related debts, excluding real estate.

Direct farm ownership loans can be used to purchase farmland, enlarge an existing farm, construct and repair buildings, and to make farm improvements.

The maximum loan amount for direct farm ownership loans is \$600,000 and the maximum loan amount for direct operating loans is \$400,000 and a down payment is not required. Repayment terms vary depending on the type of loan, collateral and the producer's ability to repay the loan. Operating loans are normally repaid within seven years and farm ownership loans are not to exceed 40 years.

Please contact your local FSA office for more information or to apply for a direct farm ownership or operating loan.

What are Your 2023 Conservation Resolutions?

2022 is coming to an end, which means it's time to start thinking about what you want to work on in the new year. Setting resolutions can be hard, but we're here to help!

If you would like to make a #ConservationResolution for 2023, here are some options to consider:

- Incorporate cover crops into your operation.
- Extend your growing season by using a high tunnel.
- Improve your soil health by utilizing no-till practices.
- Provide recreational opportunities and wildlife habitat by restoring wetlands.
- Reduce input costs by focusing on nutrient management.
- Protect topsoil and groundwater quality by devoting environmentally sensitive agricultural land to conservation benefits instead of farming.

Resolutions can be daunting and hard to stick to, but here are some tips for how to make them successful.

- **Make a plan-** To get started on your #ConservationResolutions, we recommend you stop by your [local USDA service center](#), so we can discuss your vision for your land. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) can provide you with free technical assistance and or advice.
- **Don't do it alone—** USDA's conservation programs available through NRCS and the Farm Service Agency (FSA) give you the tools and resources to protect environmentally sensitive land and restore grasslands, wetlands, and forests, which leads to cleaner water and air, healthier soil, and enhanced wildlife habitat. We can also help with financial assistance to help you achieve your #ConservationResolutions
- **See what other landowners are doing** -Learn about the benefits of conservation practices directly from the farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners applying them with our series of 90-second videos. Explore the different types of conservation practices by watching our [Conservation at Work series](#). You can also read producer profiles on [gov](#).

In January, we'll be highlighting different #ConservationResolutions that can help protect our natural resources. Follow along to start yours!

USDA Announces Details for Census of Agriculture - Feb. 6, 2023, response deadline

America's farmers and ranchers have the opportunity to be represented in the nation's only comprehensive and impartial agriculture data for every state, county and territory. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has started the collection of information for the 2022 Census of Agriculture across the 50 states and Puerto Rico.

The 2022 Census of Agriculture will be mailed in phases, starting with an invitation to respond online in November followed by paper questionnaires in December. Farm operations of all sizes, urban and rural, which produced and sold, or normally would have sold, \$1,000 or more of agricultural product in 2022 are included in the ag census.

Collected in service to American agriculture since 1840 and now conducted every five years by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), the Census of Agriculture tells the story and shows the value of U.S. agriculture. It highlights land use and ownership, producer characteristics, production practices, income and expenditures, among other topics. Between ag census years, NASS considers revisions to the questionnaire to document changes and emerging trends in the industry. Changes to the

2022 questionnaire include new questions about the use of precision agriculture, hemp production, hair sheep, and updates to internet access questions.

To learn more about the Census of Agriculture, visit nass.usda.gov/AgCensus or call 800-727-9540. On the website, producers and other data users can access frequently asked questions, past ag census data, partner tools to help spread the word about the upcoming ag census, special study information, and more. For highlights of these and the latest information on the upcoming Census of Agriculture, follow USDA NASS on twitter @usda_nass.



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