

September 14, 2018



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

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Florida FSA Newsletter

Florida Farm Service Agency

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USDA Assistance is Available to Florida Pecan Growers Affected by 2017 Weather Events

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced that assistance is available for pecan growers in Florida to replant and replace trees through the Tree Assistance Program (TAP) as they recover from the impacts of 2017 weather events.

Funding will be provided through TAP, a program administered by FSA. Up to \$15 million is available to eligible pecan orchardists or pecan nursery tree growers for certain mortality losses incurred during 2017. To be eligible, the grower must have suffered a mortality loss on a stand in excess of 7.5 percent, but less than 15 percent, adjusted for normal mortality.

The assistance was made to eligible pecan orchardists and pecan nursery tree growers by Congress through the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018. To qualify for a TAP payment for pecan tree losses, orchardists and nursery tree growers must have:

- planted, or be considered to have planted (by purchase before the loss of existing stock planted for commercial

Farm Program

Tom Hockert

Farm Loans

Justin Teuton

Please contact your local FSA Office for questions specific to your operation or county.

purposes) pecan trees for commercial purposes, or have a production history, for commercial purposes, of planted or existing trees;

- suffered a qualifying pecan tree loss in excess of 7.5 percent mortality (after adjustment for normal mortality), from Jan. 1, 2017, through Dec. 31, 2017; and
- continuously owned the stand from the time of the disaster until the time that the TAP application is submitted.

For more information about TAP, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/tap or contact your local FSA office. To find your local FSA office, visit www.farmers.gov.

Crop Insurance Deadline Nears in Florida

Oats, Potato, Sugarcane, and Wheat Growers Need to Make Insurance Decisions Soon

USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) reminds Florida oats, potato, sugarcane, and wheat growers that the final date to apply for crop insurance coverage is September 30. Current policyholders who wish to make changes to their existing coverage also have until the September 30 sales closing date to do so.

Federal crop insurance is critical to the farm safety net. It helps producers and owners manage revenue risks and strengthens the rural economy. Coverage is available for oats in **Alachua, Calhoun, Escambia, Gadsden, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Levy, Okaloosa, Walton, and Washington** counties. Coverage is also available for potatoes in **Charlotte, Collier, Highlands, Indian River, Lee, Manatee, and Okeechobee** counties. Coverage is available for sugarcane in **Glades, Hendry, Martin, and Palm Beach** counties. Coverage is also available for wheat in **Alachua, Calhoun, Columbia, Escambia, Gadsden, Gilchrist, Gulf, Hamilton, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Leon, Levy, Liberty, Madison, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, Suwannee, Walton, and Washington** counties.

Growers are encouraged to visit their crop insurance agent soon to learn specific details for the 2019 crop year. A list of crop insurance agents is available at all USDA Service Centers and online at the RMA Agent Locator. Growers can use the RMA Cost Estimator to get a premium amount estimate of their insurance needs online.

For more information about crop insurance and the modern farm safety net, visit <https://www.rma.usda.gov/tools/agent.html>.

USDA Launches Trade Mitigation Programs

USDA launched the trade mitigation package aimed at assisting farmers suffering from damage due to unjustified trade retaliation by foreign nations. Producers of certain commodities can now sign up for the Market Facilitation Program (MFP).

USDA [provided details in August](#) of the programs to be employed. USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) will administer the Market Facilitation Program (MFP) to provide payments to corn, cotton, dairy, hog, sorghum, soybean, and wheat producers. An announcement about further payments will

be made in the coming months, if warranted. USDA is currently working to determine how to address market disruptions for producers of almonds and sweet cherries.

The sign-up period for MFP is now open and runs through Jan. 15, 2019, with information and instructions provided at www.farmers.gov/mfp. MFP provides payments to cotton, corn, dairy, hog, sorghum, soybean, and wheat producers who have been significantly impacted by actions of foreign governments resulting in the loss of traditional exports. Eligible producers should apply after harvest is complete, as payments will only be issued once production is reported.

A payment will be issued on 50 percent of the producer's total production, multiplied by the MFP rate for a specific commodity. A second payment period, if warranted, will be determined by the USDA.

Market Facilitation Program

Commodity	Initial Payment Rate	Est. Initial Payment** (in \$1,000s)
Cotton	\$0.06/lb.	\$276,900
Corn	\$0.01/bu.	\$96,000
Dairy (milk)	\$0.12/cwt.	\$127,400
Pork (hogs)	\$8.00/head	\$290,300
Soybeans	\$1.65/bu.	\$3,629,700
Sorghum	\$0.86/bu.	\$156,800
Wheat	\$0.14/bu.	\$119,200
Total		\$4,696,300

**Initial payment rate on 50% of production

MFP payments are limited to a combined \$125,000 for corn, cotton, sorghum, soybeans, and wheat capped per person or legal entity. MFP payments are also limited to a combined \$125,000 for dairy and hog producers. Applicants must also have an average adjusted gross income for tax years 2014, 2015, and 2016 of less than \$900,000. Applicants must also comply with the provisions of the Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation regulations.

For more further information or to locate and contact local FSA offices, interested producers can visit www.farmers.gov

USDA Enrollment Period for Safety Net Coverage in 2018

Farmers and ranchers with base acres in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) safety net program still have time to enroll for the 2018 crop year. The enrollment period for farms without generic base acres will end on Sept. 28, 2018. Producers with generic base acres have until Dec. 7, 2018, to allocate generic base acres, update yields, make a program election for seed cotton base acres and enroll farms that formerly contained generic base acres.

Since shares and ownership of a farm can change year-to-year, producers must enroll by signing a contract each program year.

The producers on a farm that are not enrolled for the 2018 enrollment period will not be eligible for financial assistance from the ARC or PLC programs for the 2018 crop should crop prices or farm revenues fall below the historical price or revenue benchmarks established by the program. Producers who made their elections in previous years must still enroll during the 2018 enrollment period.

The ARC and PLC programs were authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill and offer a safety net to agricultural producers when there is a substantial drop in prices or revenues for covered commodities. Covered commodities include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium grain rice (which includes short grain and sweet rice), safflower seed, sesame,

soybeans, sunflower seed, wheat and upland cotton. For more details regarding these programs, go to www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc.

For more information, producers are encouraged to visit their local FSA office. To find a local FSA office, visit <https://www.farmers.gov/>.

Eligibility for Elections for the 2018 County Committee

Elections for USDA's Farm Service Agency's (FSA) County Committee are underway.

It is important that every eligible producer participate in these elections because FSA county committees are a link between the agricultural community and the USDA.

To be eligible to vote in the elections, a person must:

Meet requirement one (see explanation below) **or** meet requirement two, **and** requirement three (see explanation below).

Requirement One: Be of legal voting age and have an interest in a farm or ranch as either: an individual who meets one or more of the following; (a) is eligible to vote in one's own right, (b) is a partner of a general partnership, (c) is a member of a joint venture **OR** an authorized representative of a legal entity, such as: (a) a corporation, estate, trust, limited partnership or other business enterprise, excluding general partnership and joint ventures or (b) a state, political subdivision of a state or any state agency (only the designated representative may cast a vote for the entity).

Requirement Two: Not of legal voting age, but supervises and conducts the farming operations of an entire farm.

Requirement Three: Participates or cooperates in an FSA program that is provided by law.

County committee election ballots will be mailed to eligible voters on Nov. 5, 2018. The last day to return completed ballots to the USDA service center is Dec. 3, 2018.

For more information on eligibility to serve on FSA county committees, visit: www.fsa.usda.gov/elections.

Supervised Credit

Farm Service Agency (FSA) Farm Loan programs are considered supervised credit. Unlike loans from a commercial lender, FSA loans are intended to be temporary in nature. Therefore, it is our goal to help you graduate to commercial credit, and our farm loan staff is available to help borrowers through training and credit counseling.

The FSA team will help borrowers identify their goals to ensure financial success. Through this process, FSA staff will advise borrowers in developing strategies and a plan to meet your operation's goals and graduate to commercial credit. Ultimately, the borrower is responsible for the success of the farming operation, but FSA's staff will help in an advisory role to provide the tools necessary to help you achieve your operational goals and manage your finances.

For more information on FSA farm loan programs, visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

Communication is Key in Lending

Farm Service Agency (FSA) is committed to providing our farm loan borrowers the tools necessary to be a success. A part of ensuring this success is providing guidance and counsel from the loan application process through the borrower's graduation to commercial lending institutions. While it is FSA's commitment to advise borrowers as they identify goals and evaluate progress, it is crucial for

borrowers to communicate with their farm loan staff when changes occur. It is the borrower's responsibility to alert FSA to any of the following:

- Any proposed or significant changes in the farming operation;
- Any significant changes to family income or expenses;
- The development of problem situations;
- Any losses or proposed significant changes in security

In addition, if a farm loan borrower cannot make payments to suppliers, other creditors, or FSA on time, contact your farm loan staff immediately to discuss loan servicing options. For more information on FSA farm loan programs, visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

FSAfarm+, FSA's Customer Self-Service Portal

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) has launched a new tool to provide farmers and ranchers with remote access to their personal farm information using their home computers. Farmers and ranchers can now view, print or export their personal farm data all without visiting an FSA county office.

The program, known as **FSAfarm+**, provides you with secure access to view your personal FSA data, such as base and yields, Conservation Reserve Program data, other conservation program acreage, Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation status information, field boundaries, farm imagery, name and address details, contact information and membership interest and shares in the operation. This data will be available in real time, at no cost to the producer and allow operators and owners to export and print farm records, including maps. Producers also can electronically share their data with a crop insurance agent from their own personal computer.

Farm operators and owners first will need "Level 2 eAuthentication" to access the webportal. This level of security ensures that personal information is protected for each user. Level 2 access can be obtained by going to www.eauth.usda.gov, completing the required information and then visiting your local FSA office to finalize access.

For more information on **FSAfarm+**, the customer self-service portal, contact your local FSA office. To find your local FSA county office, click <http://offices.usda.gov>.

Save Time – Make an Appointment with FSA

Producers are encouraged to call their local FSA office to schedule an appointment to ensure maximum use of their time and to make sure FSA staff is available to tend to their important business needs. Please call your local FSA office ahead of your visit to set an appointment and to discuss any records or documentation that might be needed during your appointment. To find your local FSA office, visit: <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app>.

Weather the Storm: FEMA Mobile App Provides Weather Alerts and Safety Tips

USDA offers programs to help producers recover from disasters; FEMA can help you prepare ahead of time.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) recently launched a free mobile app that will instruct the public on what to do before, during and after emergencies. The app is available for download for Apple, Android and Blackberry mobile devices.

Download the app to:

- Receive alerts from the National Weather Service for up to five locations

- Get safety reminders, read tips to survive natural disasters and customize your emergency checklist
- Locate open shelters and where to talk to FEMA in person (or on the phone)
- Upload and share your disaster photos to help first responders.

For more information about the FEMA app, visit fema.gov/mobile-app. To download the FEMA app from the Apple Store visit <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/fema/id474807486?mt=8>. To download the FEMA app on Google Play for Android visit: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=gov.fema.mobile.android&hl=en>

Dates to Remember

October 8 - Federal Holiday Observed. Offices Closed.

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).