Breakout Session 1
Agriculture
USDA Farm Service Agency

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Introduction

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https://www.farmers.gov/
The **Farm Service Agency** implements agricultural policy, administers credit and loan programs, and manages conservation, commodity, disaster and farm marketing programs through a national network of offices.

**Today’s Discussion**

- Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP)
- Farm Loan availability and flexibilities
Coronavirus Food Assistance Program

Goal: Relief for agricultural producers impacted by COVID-19

Provides direct payments to producers of eligible commodities

• Addresses price declines and supply chain disruptions, and additional marketing costs
• 80% of eligible payment now
Coronavirus Food Assistance Program

- CFAP sign-up started **May 26, 2020** and runs through **August 28, 2020**
- Producers must submit all eligibility forms within 60 days of submitting a signed application
- Producers apply individually through their local USDA-FSA office through phone, electronic methods, mail or hand delivery to an office drop box.
- Producers self-certify to their losses; documentation needed for spot checks
Eligible producers:

- Must have ownership risk of identified commodities that suffered a 5% or greater national price decline as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic or had substantial marketing costs of inventories*
- Produce or own one of the following commodities:
  - Milk
  - Livestock
  - Non-Specialty Crops
  - Wool
  - Specialty Crops
- Visit [https://www.farmers.gov/cfap](https://www.farmers.gov/cfap) to see the full list of eligible commodities

*not applicable for specialty crops categories 2 and 3
Eligibility

- Producer does NOT need to be an existing USDA customer
- Producers must own or share in the risk of the commodity and have a share of the commodity available for marketing
- Producer can participate in PPP or EIDL or USDA programs (including loans or risk management programs), if eligible, without conflict.
Payment Limitation

- $250,000 per person and legal entity payment limitation
- Unlike other FSA programs, special payment limitation rules are applied to participants that are corporations, limited liability companies, and limited partnerships (corporate entities).
  - Can receive up to $750,000 based upon the number of shareholders (not to exceed three shareholders) who are contributing at least 400 hours of active person management or personal active labor.
Subject to Price Risk Provisions

• **CFAP commodities must be subject to price risk on January 15, 2020 to be eligible for CFAP**

• **Specialty crops**
  • Eligible specialty crops are those that experienced immediate losses, a price decline, spoiled, were unpaid, or were unharvested due to market conditions between January 15, 2020, and April 15, 2020.
Additional Commodities to be Considered for CFAP

• More than 40 additional crops became eligible July 9
• A full listing of these commodities, and their associated payment rates, can be found at www.farmers.gov/cfap
CFAP Payments

• Will be processed and paid immediately after the application is approved.

• Will not be withheld to satisfy prior USDA debts nor offset by Treasury.

Note: This is not a loan program and payments do not have to be repaid (unless there has been an error or fraud). There is no fee to apply for this program.
Forms & Documentation

When applying, farmers will need to complete the following forms:

• **CFAP Application – AD-3114** (automatically generated from the CFAP Application Generator and Payment Calculator)
• Member Information – CCC-901*
• Adjusted Gross Income – CCC-941*
• Income from Farming – CCC-942*
• Highly Erodible Land / Wetlands – AD-1026*
• Customer Information – AD-2047*
• Direct Deposit – SF-3881*

A CFAP Application Generator and Payment Calculator is available to assist with the CFAP application process. Visit [www.farmers.gov/cfap](http://www.farmers.gov/cfap).

Existing customers: Many of these documents may already be on file with FSA.
Gathering the following types of documents and information will help producers complete the CFAP application.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Livestock</th>
<th>Non-Specialty Crop &amp; Wool</th>
<th>Specialty Crop</th>
<th>Dairy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Livestock inventory between Apr 16-May 14, 2020</td>
<td>Total 2019 production that was unsold as of Jan 15, 2020</td>
<td>Quantity of crops shipped and spoiled or unpaid between Jan 15-Apr 15, 2020</td>
<td>Milk marketing statements for Jan, Feb, and Mar 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Acres of crops unharvested or will not be sold by Apr 15, 2020</td>
<td></td>
<td>Records of dumped milk for Jan, Feb, and Mar 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
New to USDA?

- No farm number needed to apply and receive payment
  - FSA may follow up with certain producers after CFAP to establish a farm record in order to fulfill Highly Erodible Conservation and Wetland Conservation requirements
- Ask for help with your application
  - Phone appointment
  - CFAP Call Center
- Demographic and operation information forms needed. Producers will need to provide:
  - Name and address
  - Personal information, including your Tax Identification Number
  - Farm operating structure
  - Adjusted Gross Income compliance certification to ensure eligibility
  - Direct deposit information to enable payment
Utilizing the Customer Call Center

- New FSA customers can call: 877-508-8364
- Work one-on-one with an employee and get a direct transfer to the applicable service center
How to apply for CFAP

• Electronically - Using an online portal, accessible at farmers.gov/cfap, allows producers with secure USDA login credentials

• Manual Application - Submit application to their local USDA Service Center

• Submit electronically using securely transmitted digitally signed application using Box and OneSpan
What happens after a producer signs a CFAP application?

- Producers have 60 days from signing their CFAP application to resolve any eligibility issues with their local office.
- Local office begins reviewing a producer’s application after the producer signs it, and will follow up with questions or missing information.
- Approved applications are sent to processing for payment.
- Producers will be notified and provided opportunity to respond to adjustments by USDA that affect a producer’s payment.
Farm Loan Programs

- Operating Loans
  - Farm Operating and Living Expenses
  - Purchase livestock or equipment

- Farm Ownership Loans
  - Purchase farm or ranch
  - Make necessary improvement, i.e. barn, fencing

- Flexibilities
Direct and Guaranteed Loans

Maximum Loan Amounts

- Direct Operating Loan - $400,000
- Direct Farm Ownership - $600,000
- Guaranteed Loans - $1,776,000
- Youth Loans - $5,000
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

Clint Evans
Acting State Conservationist
USDA Office of Partnership and Public Engagement

Jacqueline Davis-Slay
Deputy Director, OPPE
Centers for Community
Prosperity Grant Program
USDA Office of Partnership and Public Engagement

Kenya Nichols
Director, OPPE
2501 Program
Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers (aka The “2501 Program”)
Overview

1. Farming Opportunities Training and Outreach (FOTO)
2. Program Basics & Definitions
3. Programmatic Changes
4. External Independent Peer Reviews
5. Resources
6. Application & Submission Requirements
Farming Opportunities
Training and Outreach

• Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers (also known as the 2501 Program)
• 2018 Farm Bill merged 2501 and BFRDP into FOTO
• Continue to operate as separate programs within the Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement and BFRDP to remain under NIFA
• Funding will be shared equally within both programs.
Program Basics

“Purpose”

Competitive grant program for projects that provide outreach, education, mentoring and technical assistance for socially disadvantaged and veteran farmers and ranchers.

The goal is to increase access to and awareness of USDA’s programs and services in socially disadvantaged and veteran farmers and ranchers’ communities. This includes assisting them in operating sustainable farming operations.
Program Basics: Recipients

- The recipients must be a collaborative, State, tribal, local, or regionally-based network or partnership of public or private organizations.
- Not for individuals (see www.usda.gov/newfarmers).
- Priority to nongovernmental, community-based organizations with expertise in training and outreach to socially disadvantaged and veteran farmers and ranchers.
Definition: Socially Disadvantaged

• A member of group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice because of their identity as members of a group without regard to their individual qualities.

• These groups include:
  – African Americans
  – American Indians or Alaskan Natives
  – Asians or Pacific Islanders
  – Hispanics
  – Women are not considered “socially disadvantaged” but are eligible beneficiaries as “veterans”
Definition: Socially Disadvantaged, cont’d.

• Farmworkers who want to become farmers or ranchers are eligible program beneficiaries
• May include refugees or immigrants
• May include seasonal or migrant farmworkers
Definition: Veteran Farmer or Rancher

Veteran farmer or rancher means a farmer or rancher who served in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released from the service under conditions other than dishonorable. (See 7 U.S.C. 2279(e) for further details.)
Funding to Assist Military Veterans

- Provide evidence of your ability to serve the needs of the identified audience, e.g., a strong track record of previous work with veterans
- Military Veteran Agricultural Liaison – Bill Ashton (bill.ashton@usda.gov)
Programmatic Changes

- 2018 Farm Bill Combined BFRDP
- FY 2020 - $30 million (50% - $15 million 2501)
- Additional $5.5 million for FY2020
- FY 2021 - $35 million ($17.5 million)
- FY 2022 - $40 million ($20 million)
- FY 2023 - $50 million ($25 million in permanent funding thereafter)
Programmatic Changes, *cont’d.*

- Maximum grant is $250,000 per year
- Up to 3-year terms
- Peer reviews (external with experience working with socially disadvantaged and veterans)
- Priority for nongovernmental/community-based organizations (per 2018 Farm Bill)
- Geographical diversity
- Stakeholder feedback (during annual symposium)
Programmatic Changes, *cont’d.*

- Current awardees (organizations) may not reapply until the current project is entering its last year of funding

- Eligible applicants may NOT submit more than one proposal for consideration
Independent Peer Review Process

- Designed to be fair and unbiased as required in 2018 Farm Bill
- Reviews include applicant peers
- Always soliciting additional reviewers
- Only information in the application is used
- Completely confidential - Identity of reviewers undisclosed
- Contents of proposals subject to FOIA
If you are not planning to apply for a grant and want to be considered as a reviewer:

• Send an email to 2501grants@osec.usda.gov
• State “2501 Reviewer” in the subject line
• Include:
  – A brief description of your experience and expertise with grants and serving veterans and/or socially disadvantaged/farmworkers, etc.)
  – Resume to include outreach, farming and ranching technical assistance experience
Resources

Build on prior experience and avoid duplication by reviewing past and current projects:

• “Funded Projects” on OPPE’s grants page: https://www.usda.gov/partnerships/socially-disadvantaged-farmers-and-ranchers
• Library, Programs & Projects at www.FarmAnswers.org
• USDA Resources - www.farmers.gov
Strategies for Better Serving Socially Disadvantaged, Veteran, Youth or Limited Resource Farmers or Ranchers

• Observe cultural norms of the group
• One-on-one training
• Social media & social networks
• Effective partnerships
• Innovative approaches to outreach
Local Prosperity Councils
Related Program of Interest

• The FY 2020 Enhancing Agricultural Opportunities for Military Veterans Competitive Grants Program (AgVets) will post Winter 2020.

• Consider this program if you have demonstrated experience.

• Inquire about priority for veteran status
AgVets (cont.)

• The NIFA Funding Opportunity Page: https://nifa.usda.gov/funding-opportunity/enhancing-agricultural-opportunities-military-veterans

• Grants.gov Page: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=298885. This page includes a synopsis of the funding opportunity, a link to the full announcement and the application package.
Proposal Submission Requirements

- Only electronic applications through grants.gov are accepted, unless otherwise approved.
- Follow all guidelines very carefully as stated in the Funding Opportunity Announcement.
- Deadlines firm - Eastern Time (ET).
- Federal Register will be published at: [www.federalregister.gov](http://www.federalregister.gov).
- Email database subscribers will receive notifications.
Proposal Submission Requirements, *cont’d.*

- **Register with Grants.Gov – Right Away!**
  
  http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp
  
  - Several steps may be required; could take weeks to complete

- **Check on Computer essentials**
  
  - Adobe Acrobat – only .pdf files are accepted
  - High speed connection may be required
  - Work with universities, county extension, libraries, or non-profits
Application Assistance

- Teleconferences during open period
- Grant Writing Webinar (YouTube)
- 2501 Grants Staff – [2501grants@usda.gov](mailto:2501grants@usda.gov)
The 2501 Annual Partnership Symposium

OPPE is required to seek input from stakeholders providing technical assistance under this grant program at least annually. This ensures that the program is responsive to the concerns of SDFRs and eligible entities providing technical assistance.

To fulfill this obligation, the OPPE may require Project Directors to attend an annual training conference that can be expensed with awarded grant funds not to exceed $1,000 per award year.
Contact Information for 2501 Staff

Brenda Wise
202-720-1239
brenda.wise@osec.usda.gov

Kenya Nicholas
202-692-0098
kenya.nicholas@osec.usda.gov

Administrative Questions: 202-720-6350 or 2501grants@osec.usda.gov

Contact Information for Grants.gov

- 1-800-518-4726; open 24/7 except closed on Federal holidays
- Email: support@grants.gov
- Get a Case ID # if you are having submission problems.
Wrap-Up
Break