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Volume 10 Number 24, April 2021

Pandemic Assistance Programs for Greenhouses and Nurseries

Nearly all sectors of agriculture have been impacted by market disruptions during the COVID-19 pandemic. On March 24 of this year, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) dedicated \$6 billion towards programs and efforts to provide financial assistance for agriculture producers including nursery, greenhouse, cacti, and Christmas tree producers negatively impacted in 2020 by the Coronavirus pandemic.

The USDA Pandemic Assistance for Producers initiative is intended to reach more producers than previous COVID-19 aid programs - including small and socially disadvantaged, specialty crop, and organic producers. The pandemic assistance initiative includes numerous programs (see <https://www.farmers.gov/pandemic-assistance> for all details).

The USDA Pandemic Assistance for Producers program is administered by the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA). Many producers involved in the ornamental industry rarely deal with FSA programs, and most have not visited or been in contact with their nearest FSA office. I encourage each of you to contact your local FSA office today and schedule an appointment. You can find your local FSA office here: <https://www.farmers.gov/service-center-locator>. Here's why:

Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP)

The USDA Pandemic Assistance for Producers includes a re-opening of the CFAP 2 program. Ornamental growers - do not let the name of this program prevent you from reading further!

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There have been two iterations of this program - CFAP 1 and CFAP 2. CFAP 2 is of particular importance to floriculture and nursery businesses. Last year, floriculture and nursery producers were able to apply for CFAP 2 payments based upon their 2019 sales. However, many producers were (and still are) unaware of this payment program. The greenhouses that did enroll were pleasantly surprised to receive a payment.

Also note that the CFAP 2 program includes numerous commodities and specialty crops aside from ornamentals - including vegetables (greenhouse tomatoes, lettuce, peppers, and cucumbers would fall here), fruits, horticulture crops (hops, herbs, etc.), aquaculture, turfgrass sod, row crops, livestock, tree nuts, honey, and more. If you produce other items in addition to floriculture or nursery products, you will want to explore your eligibility for those payments. See farmers.gov/pandemic-assistance/cfap for all eligible categories.

If you missed enrolling in CFAP 2 last year, don't delay! ***Enrollment for CFAP 2 reopened on April 5, 2021 - and will remain open for at least 60 days.*** Time is of the essence, so please contact your FSA office today to make an appointment

How are CFAP payments calculated? CFAP payments are calculated using a producer's eligible sales of raw commodities from calendar year 2019 (including crop insurance indemnities, NAP, and WHIP+ payments for crop year 2019) multiplied by the applicable payment rate in Table 1. The rates for floriculture, nursery and specialty crops are the same.

Note: If you already submitted a CFAP 2 application by December 2020, consider applying for a modification this round which may result in a higher payment.

CFAP 2 Payments for Floriculture, Nursery, and Specialty Crops	
2019 Sales Range	% Payment Factor for 2019 Sales of Eligible Commodities Falling in the Range
\$0 to \$49,999	10.6%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	9.9%
\$100,000 to \$499,99	9.7%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	9.0%
\$1 million+	8.8%

Table 1. Payment factors for floriculture, nursery, and specialty crops based upon 2019 sales of raw commodities in each sales range. Source: <http://farmers.gov/cfap>

Next Steps

1. Please read more about the CFAP 2 program (<https://www.farmers.gov/cfap>) to determine all eligible agricultural products you produce.
2. Contact your local FSA office and schedule an appointment. You can find your local office [here](#). Some producers may be able to apply for CFAP 2 online.
3. Provide all necessary application information to FSA.

Another Important Consideration

You or your business may be eligible for a Paycheck Protection Program loan and loan forgiveness to help keep your workforce employed. ***Enrollment for this program ends May 31, 2021.*** Additional information can be found through the US Small Business Administration [here](#).

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