

COVID-19 UPDATE



CFAP 2 APPLICATION REMINDER

As you may recall, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced last month that it is implementing the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2 (CFAP) for agricultural producers who continue to face market disruptions and associated costs because of COVID-19. Producers can begin to apply for CFAP 2 on September 21st through December 11th.

CFAP 2 payments will provide eligible producers with financial assistance that gives them the ability to absorb some of the increased marketing costs associated with the COVID-19 outbreak. USDA has incorporated improvements in CFAP 2 based on stakeholder engagement and public feedback to better meet the needs of impacted farmers and ranchers.

Additional commodities are eligible in CFAP 2 that were not included in the first round of the program. CFAP 2 payments will be made for three categories of payment calculations:

Sales Commodities, including specialty crops, tobacco, and aquaculture, use a sales-based approach, where producers are paid based on five payment gradations associated with their 2019 sales.

Price trigger commodities, including row crops, livestock, and dairy, are major commodities that meet a minimum 5-percent price decline from January through July.

Flat-rate row crops that do not meet the 5-percent price decline trigger or do not have data available to calculate a price change will have payments calculated based on eligible 2020 acres multiplied by \$15 per acre.

The CWRAB would like to remind the industry that wild rice has been included in CFAP 2. A complete list of eligible commodities, payment rates and calculations can be found on www.farmers.gov/cfap.

Producers can apply for assistance through USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA). Customers seeking one-on-one support with the CFAP 2 application process can call 877-508-8364 to speak directly with a USDA employee ready to offer assistance. This is a recommended first step before a producer engages with the team at the FSA county office. More information can be found at www.farmers.gov/coronavirus.

If you plan to or have already applied for the CFAP 2 funding, please notify the CWRAB office so that we may report back to USDA our industry's participation in the program. If you have any further questions regarding this information, please do not hesitate to contact the Commission office.

UFW FILES LAWSUIT AGAINST USDA OVER FARM LABOR DATA COLLECTION SURVEY SUSPENSION

Last week, the United Farm Workers union (UFW) filed a [lawsuit](#) to reverse an [order](#) from the United States Department of Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue, filed on September 30, 2020, to cease the government's collection of farm worker data that is typically used to calculate the U.S. Department of Labor's Adverse Effect Wage Rates, a minimum wage that must be paid to guest farmworkers under the H-2A temporary agricultural workers program.

In its Sept. 30 decision, the USDA said it found other data sources can be used to replace the information collected in the biannual survey. It lists six other potential sources: the Agricultural Resources Management Survey, Census of Agriculture, American Community Survey, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, National Economic Accounts, and the National Agricultural Workers Survey. The USDA said its National Agricultural Statistics Service would not be collecting farmworker wage data in October or publishing a report in November as previously planned.

In its 26-page lawsuit, United Farm Workers – the largest agricultural union in the U.S. – claims the USDA failed to provide an adequate justification, consider all issues relevant to its decision or provide notice and an opportunity for public comment as required by the Administrative Procedure Act.