

USDA Issues Third Tranche of 2019 MFP Payments

Monday, February 3, 2020

From the USDA

At the direction of President Donald J. Trump, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue today announced the third and final tranche of 2019 Market Facilitation Program (MFP) payments aimed at assisting farmers suffering from damage due to unjustified trade retaliation by foreign nations. The payments will begin to show up in farmers' bank accounts by the end of this week.

"It's been a great start to 2020 for American Agriculture with the signing of the historic Phase One Deal with China and the signing of USMCA," said Secretary Perdue. "While these agreements are welcome news, we must not forget that 2019 was a tough year for farmers as they were the tip of the spear when it came to unfair trade retaliation. President Trump has shown time and again that he is fighting for America's farmers and ranchers and this third tranche of 2019 MFP payments is proof. President Trump is following through on his promise to help and support farmers as he continues to fight for fair market access just like he did with China."

Details Regarding Third Tranche of 2019 MFP Payments:

Payments will be made by FSA under the authority of CCC Charter Act to producers of alfalfa hay, barley, canola, corn, crambe, dried beans, dry peas, extra-long staple cotton, flaxseed, lentils, long grain and medium grain rice, millet, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, rapeseed, rye, safflower, sesame seed, small and large chickpeas, sorghum, soybeans, sunflower seed, temperate japonica rice, triticale, upland cotton, and wheat. MFP assistance for these non-specialty crops is based on a single county payment rate multiplied by a farm's total plantings of MFP-eligible crops in aggregate in 2019. Those per-acre payments are not dependent on which of these crops are planted in 2019. A producer's total payment-eligible plantings cannot exceed total 2018 plantings. County payment rates range from \$15 to \$150 per acre, depending on the impact of unjustified trade retaliation in that county.

Dairy producers who were in business as of June 1, 2019, will receive a per hundredweight payment on Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) production history, and hog producers will receive a payment based on the number of live hogs owned on a day selected by the producer between April 1 and May 15, 2019. MFP payments will also be made to producers of almonds, cranberries, cultivated ginseng, fresh grapes, fresh sweet cherries, hazelnuts, macadamia nuts, pecans, pistachios, and walnuts. Each specialty crop will receive a payment based on 2019 acres of fruit or nut bearing plants, or in the case of ginseng, based on harvested acres in 2019.

Acreage of non-specialty crops and cover crops had to be planted by August 1, 2019 to be considered eligible for MFP payments.

Per-acre non-specialty crop county payment rates, specialty crop payment rates, and livestock payment rates are all currently available on farmers.gov.

This is the final of three tranches of MFP payments. The first tranche was comprised of the higher of either 50 percent of a producer's calculated payment or \$15 per acre, which may reduce potential payments to be made in tranche three. The second tranche was 25% of the total payment expected, in addition to the 50% from the first tranche.

MFP payments are limited to a combined \$250,000 for non-specialty crops per person or legal entity. MFP payments are also limited to a combined \$250,000 for dairy and hog producers and a combined \$250,000 for specialty crop producers. However, no applicant can receive more than \$500,000. Eligible applicants must also have an average adjusted gross income (AGI) for tax years 2015, 2016, and 2017 of less than \$900,000 unless at least 75 percent of the person's or legal entity's AGI is derived from farming, ranching, or forestry related activities. Applicants must also comply with the provisions of the Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation regulations.

Many producers were affected by natural disasters this spring, such as flooding, that kept them out of the field for extended periods of time. Producers who filed a prevented planting claim and planted an FSA-certified cover crop, with the potential to be harvested qualify for a \$15 per acre payment. Acres that were never planted in 2019 are not eligible for an MFP payment.

In June, H.R. 2157, the Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act of 2019, was signed into law by President Trump, requiring a change to the first round of MFP assistance provided in 2018. Producers previously deemed ineligible for MFP in 2018 because they had an average AGI level higher than \$900,000 may now be eligible for 2018 MFP benefits. Those producers must be able to verify 75 percent or more of their average AGI was derived from farming and ranching to qualify. This supplemental MFP signup period will run parallel to the 2019 MFP signup, from July 29 through December 6, 2019.

For more information on the MFP, visit <http://www.farmers.gov/mfp> or contact your local FSA office, which can be found at <http://www.farmers.gov>.

Save the Date!

PCG Annual Meeting

Friday, April 3 • 9 a.m.

Lubbock Memorial Civic Center

Speaker: David Wasserman

House Editor, The Cook Political Report

Sponsored by Farmers Cooperative Compress

More information: plainscotton.org

Upcoming Area Ag Conferences

This list is kept updated on the PCG website: <https://plainscotton.org/upcoming-area-ag-conferences/>.

February 11 – Pesticide Applicators Training, 1 p.m., Texas A&M AgriLife Research & Extension Office, **Levelland**. Please RSVP by noon Monday, February 10. More info: Kerry Siders, EA-IPM, (806) 894-3159. This is required training in order to obtain a TDA pesticide applicators license.

February 11-12 – No-Till Texas Soil Health Symposium, Overton Hotel & Conference Center, 2322 Mac Davis Lane, **Lubbock**. 8 a.m. both days. More info: <https://www.no-tilltexas.com>

February 12 – Crop Production Meeting, Rita Blanca Coliseum, **Dalhart**. Lunch provided. Auxin training included. More info: Mike Bragg, CEA-AG/NR, (806) 244-4434.

February 14, March 13, April 10, and May 8 – Auxin Certification Training, 9 a.m., Texas A&M AgriLife Research & Extension Center, 1102 E. FM 1294, **Lubbock**. One CEU in Laws & Regs. More info: (806) 746-6101, pete.dotray@agnet.tamu.edu

February 20 – NE Panhandle Summer Crops Conference, 8 a.m.-2 p.m., Frank Phillips College Allen Campus, **Perryton**. Cost: \$10, lunch provided. 3 CEUs. More info: Scott Strawn, CEA-AG/NR, (806) 435-4501.

February 24 – Hansford/Hutchinson Estate Planning & Farm Bill Meeting, 10 a.m.-Noon, Hansford AgriLife Office, **Spearman**. Cost: \$10, lunch provided. Auxin Training at 1 p.m. More info: Hansford County Extension (806) 659-4130.

February 25 – Deaf Smith Cotton Conference, Registration 8:30 a.m., Deaf Smith AgriLife Extension Office, **Hereford**. Cost: \$20, lunch included. 3 CEUs. More info: Rick Auckerman, CEA-AG/NR, (806) 364-3573.

February 26 – Central Plains Ag Conference, Registration 8 a.m., Olton Ag Pavilion, **Olton**. Lunch provided, Auxin Certification available. More info: Kerry Siders, (806) 638-5635; Kyle Howard at (806) 620-6595; or Andrew Dunlap at (806) 647-4115.

February 27 – Producer Meeting, 9 a.m., Community Center, **Turkey**. CEU's and Auxin Certification Training included. More info: Mason Carter, CEA-AG/NR, (806) 823-2521.

February 28 – Hub of the Plains Ag Conference, registration 8 a.m., program 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Texas A&M AgriLife Research & Extension Center, 1102 E. FM 1294, **Lubbock**. Cost: \$20, includes lunch. 4 CEU's offered, including Auxin Certification. More info: Andrew Dunlap, (806) 647-4115.

March 4 (RESCHEDULED from February 12) – “Owning Your Piece of Texas: Agricultural Laws Texas Landowners Need to Know” Workshop, 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m., Texas A&M AgriLife Research & Extension Center, 6500 W. Amarillo Blvd., **Amarillo**. Cost: \$75. Preregistration is requested at <https://agriliferegister.tamu.edu/landowners> or by calling 979-845-2604. More info: Tiffany Dowell Lashmet, (806) 677-5681 or tdowell@tamu.edu.

March 12 – Auxin Certification Training, 9 a.m. and again at 1 p.m., Texas A&M AgriLife Research & Extension Office, **Levelland**. Please RSVP by noon March 11. More info: Kerry Siders, EA-IPM, (806) 894-3159.

March 13 – Auxin Certification Training, 9 a.m., Texas A&M AgriLife Research & Extension Center, 6500 W. Amarillo Blvd., **Amarillo**. More info: Dr. Jourdan Bell, Extension Agronomist, (806) 677-5663.

To add your conference to this list, please email maryjane@plainscotton.org.

Secretary Perdue Appoints Members and Alternates to Cotton Board

Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue has announced the appointment of 18 members and 18 alternate members to serve on The Cotton Board. These appointees will serve three-year terms, ending December 31, 2022.

Newly appointed members are: Gokul Krishnan, Importer - AR and John Stokes, Importer - MA. Re-appointed members are: Walt Corcoran, Producer - AL; Peter M. McGrath, Importer - CO; David J. DeFelix, Producer - FL; James L. Webb, Producer - GA; Suzanne R. Drouhard, Producer - KS; Joe Don Long, Importer - KY; Kim Mayberry-Holifield, Producer - MO; Arlene M. Eastwood, Importer - NJ; Laurie A. Rando, Importer - NJ; Alisa Ogden, Producer - NM; J. Mark Nichols, Producer - OK; Rusty Darby, Producer - SC; Catherine S. Via, Producer - TN; Matt Farmer, Producer - TX; Shelley S. Butler Barlow, Producer - VA; and Emily Gigot, Importer - WA.

Newly appointed alternate members are: Nick McMichen, Producer - AL; Jessica Pagano, Importer - FL; Dominique D. Brown, Importer - MN; Roian Atwood, Importer - NC; Michelle Tarry, Importer - NJ; Eun Hwang, Importer - OR; Frank B. Rogers III, Producer - SC; Alex Armour, Producer - TN; and James W. Jones, Jr., Producer - VA. Re-appointed alternate members are: Alan J. Edwards, Producer - FL; Benjamin R. Grimsley, Producer - GA; Thomas L. Lahey, Producer - KS; Albert Riley James, Producer - MO; Nathan Jurva, Producer - NM; Tara Hoffmann, Importer - NY; Clint Abernathy, Producer - OK; James C. Self III, Importer - SC; and R.N. Hopper Jr., Producer - TX.

In addition, Barbara Buhr, West Hartford, Conn., has been appointed to serve as importer alternate member to fill a vacant position, term expiring Dec. 31, 2020, and Melissa Bryant, Irvine, Calif., has been appointed to serve as importer alternate member to fill a vacant position, term expiring Dec. 31, 2021.

“I am pleased to welcome this group of leaders to The Cotton Board and look forward to the guidance they will offer the Cotton Research and Promotion Program,” said Jeff Posey, Texas cotton producer and current Chairman of The Cotton Board. “On behalf of The Cotton Board, I would like to thank Secretary Perdue for these timely appointments and thank the appointees for their willingness to share their time and expertise with the cotton industry.”

Members, Alternates and consumer advisors of The Cotton Board collaboratively represent the interests of both importers and producers to The Cotton Board and Cotton Incorporated. Their insight contributes to activities of the Cotton Research & Promotion Program targeted at improving the profitability of the entire cotton industry.

Editor's Note:

“Cotton News”, a weekly service of Plains Cotton Growers to the cotton industry and news media in the 41-county High Plains area, is mailed from Lubbock each Friday. Its contents are confined to news items and comments pertaining to the High Plains cotton industry which is so vital to U.S. all. Anyone interested in making comments about the contents of this column can call 806-792-4904 or Email PCG at: editor@plainscotton.org