

USDA and FarmRaise Launch Additional Online Disaster Assistance Decision Tool for Livestock, Honey Bee and Farm-Raised Fish Producers

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Partnership further expands online library of disaster assistance and farm loan program reference resources and decision aids?

WASHINGTON, May 28, 2024 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture, in partnership with FarmRaise, today launched a new, online Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees and Farm-raised Fish Program (ELAP) Decision Tool. The USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) tool is designed to assist agricultural producers who have been impacted by natural disasters access available program support. This ELAP Decision Tool, a component of a broader disaster assistance program educational module, further expands the library of online FSA disaster and farm loan program reference resources and decision aids currently available to agricultural producers on the FarmRaise [FSA educational hub](#). ?The Decision Tool is a resource only and is not an application for benefits or a determination of eligibility.

“The Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees and Farm-raised Fish Program is our most flexible tool for dealing with natural disasters and other qualifying losses. As we continue to enhance this critical program, having the right tool to streamline application processes can expedite assistance,” said FSA Administrator Zach Ducheneaux. “FarmRaise uses feedback from cooperators and producers to develop the tools they request to more easily navigate our programs, allowing them to maximize assistance available through FSA’s extensive program portfolio. This tool is the next iteration of this important work.”

[ELAP](#) is designed to address losses not covered by other FSA disaster assistance programs. ?The program?provides recovery assistance to eligible producers of livestock, honey bee, and farm-raised fish losses due to an eligible adverse weather or loss condition, including drought, blizzards, disease, water shortages and wildfires. ELAP covers grazing and feed losses, transportation of water and feed to livestock and hauling livestock to grazing acres due to an eligible loss condition. ELAP also covers certain mortality losses, due to an eligible condition, for livestock including honey bees and farm-raised fish as well as honey bee hive losses.

New FarmRaise Tools and Resources?

[FarmRaise](#), in partnership with FSA, recently launched their online, [educational hub](#) – the FarmRaise | FSA Educational Hub – comprised of videos, tools and interactive resources that enable USDA cooperators and agricultural producers to learn about and access major FSA programs.

A new addition to the hub, the ELAP Decision Tool helps eligible producers impacted by qualifying

natural disasters and other eligible causes of loss better understand program eligibility and application requirements, learn about record-keeping and supporting loss documentation requirements and track the steps needed before applying for program benefits. The document generated by the ELAP Decision Tool can be used to support the ELAP application process, but it is not a program application. Producers will need to complete and submit the ELAP Application to their local FSA county office. Upon request, applicants may be asked to provide additional supporting documentation per the program requirements.

Through use of the ELAP Decision Tool, producers can segment by loss type (honey bee, farm-raised fish and livestock). This enables easier navigation, as guided by the tool, to assistance available to meet specific disaster recovery needs. After entering the type of loss, identifying the loss condition and entering their inventory and loss information, producers are guided through a worksheet that helps identify required loss documentation — documentation (i.e., pictures, receipts, truck logs, etc.) that can be uploaded through the ELAP tool and sent directly to the producer's local FSA county office, or producers can provide a copy of the tool-generated worksheet summary document when they visit their local FSA county office to complete and submit the required ELAP application.

“We're thrilled to expand the resources available on the FarmRaise FSA Educational Hub, with a particular focus on disaster relief and emergency programs,” said Sami Tellatin, the COO of FarmRaise. “It's imperative that farmers and ranchers have easy access to these much-needed assistance programs, and the newest resources available on the hub will ensure greater empowerment and a smoother process for producers already facing difficult circumstances.”

Additional FarmRaise Resources

The [previously announced](#) Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) Decision Tool, also available through the FarmRaise | FSA Educational Hub, assists livestock producers who suffered losses from eligible adverse weather events and other causes of loss as well as cooperators who are helping disaster-impacted livestock producers navigate available federal disaster assistance programs. The LIP Decision Tool gives producers guidance on what is needed to gather and submit required loss documentation, reducing the amount of time needed to complete applications and enabling FSA county office staff to deliver much-needed assistance faster. Using the LIP Decision Tool is not an application for benefits or a determination of eligibility.

In addition to the new ELAP Decision Tool and the LIP Decision Tool, the FarmRaise | FSA Educational Hub offers several, easily navigated farm loan programs how-to videos designed to introduce producers to FSA's many farm loan programs options and guide them through the application process.

More FSA program resources and tools will continue to be added to the FarmRaise | FSA Educational Hub. Cooperators and agricultural producers are encouraged to visit the FarmRaise | FSA Educational Hub often to access all available educational resources.

About the Partnership

USDA cooperators are organizations on the frontlines of access and often are the first point of contact connecting farmers to USDA programs. By developing a digital educational hub that delivers free, user-friendly, producer and cooperator-tested resources and Decision Tools, the USDA and FarmRaise, partnership will help FSA improve educational program delivery to agricultural producers. The hub offers how-to videos and visual aids that educate producers about FSA programs and prepares them for submitting applications for program participation.

More Information

To learn more about FSA programs, producers can contact their local USDA Service Center. Producers can also prepare maps for acreage reporting as well as manage farm loans and view other farm records data and customer information by logging into their farmers.gov account. If you don't have an account, [sign up today](#). To learn more about FarmRaise, visit the [FSA educational hub](#) on the FarmRaise website.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. Under the Biden-Harris administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit [usda.gov](#).

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