
MILC payments are triggered when the Boston Class I milk price falls below $16.94 per hundredweight, after adjustment for the cost of dairy feed rations. MILC payments are calculated each month using the latest milk price and feed cost.

As announced by FSA on Jan. 22, all dairy producers’ MILC contracts are automatically extended to Sept. 30, 2013. Eligible producers therefore do not need to re-enroll in MILC. MILC operations with approved contracts will continue to receive monthly payments, if available.

The payment rate for September 2012 is approximately $0.59 per hundredweight. The payment rate for October 2012 marketing is approximately $0.02 per hundredweight. The payment rate for November 2012 marketing is zero.

Before the October MILC payment can be issued, dairy farmers must complete a new Average Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) form for 2013. The new form, CCC-933 Average Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) Certification and Consent to Disclosure of Tax Information, must complete by producers before they can receive payments for a variety of programs administered by FSA and USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service. Producers may obtain CCC-933 at their local USDA Service Center or online at www.fsa.usda.gov/ccc933. Specific detail about AGI may be found here.

Dairy operations may select a production start month other than October 2012. Producers who want to select a production start month other than October 2012 must visit their local FSA office between Feb. 1 and Feb. 28, 2013, also known as a relief period.
WASHINGTON, Feb. 1, 2013 - Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today highlighted how the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) resolved dozens of export issues in 2012, freeing up an estimated $4 billion in U.S. agricultural and forestry exports and protecting roughly 30,000 American jobs in the process. The work is highlighted on Performance.gov, a resource for demonstrating how the Obama Administration is improving performance and accountability for the American people and businesses.

“As consumers around the world demand high-quality, American-grown products, USDA staff are monitoring more than 160 markets to ensure an open system of trade, free from unwarranted and unjustified barriers,” said Vilsack. “Since 2009, USDA has acted to remove hundreds of unfair barriers to trade for American companies and is providing businesses with the resources they need to reach new markets. These efforts have resulted in the most successful period in the history for American agriculture and a boon for America’s rural economies and agriculture-related businesses.”

Over the past year, USDA has aggressively worked to eliminate barriers, open new markets, secure the release of U.S. shipments detained at foreign ports, and ensure the safe movement of agricultural products in a manner consistent with science and international standards. Overall, a highly-dedicated group of USDA Foreign Service officers, animal and plant health experts, and analysts monitor 162 markets around the world, ensuring a level playing field for U.S. businesses and products. USDA works in partnership with the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) and other federal offices and agencies.

Currently, the American brand of agriculture is surging in popularity worldwide, while U.S. agricultural exports support more than 1 million jobs in communities across the country. Fiscal years 2009 through 2012 generated more than $478 billion in agricultural exports, and 2013 agricultural exports remain on track to set new records. Overall, America’s agricultural sector is playing a key role in helping to achieve President Obama’s goal under the National Export Initiative of doubling exports by the end of 2014.

This success builds on USDA’s efforts to break down barriers to trade and expand access for U.S. goods around the world. Earlier this week, USDA announced that the Government of Japan—the fourth largest agricultural export market for the United States - agreed to expand access for U.S. beef. Under these new terms, which enter into effect on February 1, 2013, Japan will now permit the import of beef from cattle less than 30 months of age, compared to the previous limit of 20 months, among other steps. It is estimated that these important changes will result in hundreds of millions of dollars in exports of U.S. beef to Japan in the coming years. This agreement also goes a long way toward normalizing trade with Japan by addressing long-standing restrictions that Japan introduced in response to bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE).

As American businesses look to reach the 95 percent of consumers outside of U.S. borders, USDA is providing support and service. For example, in 2012, USDA has been able to help conduct more than 110 trade shows around the world to help more than 1,000 U.S. companies make more than $500 million in on-site sales. The majority of these were small and medium-sized businesses. While strong exports benefit farms and rural communities, agricultural trade is also a building block for a strong national economy.

Along with their federal partners, USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) works to protect the health and value of American agriculture and natural resources in the international environment. Last year, APHIS successfully negotiated and resolved 150 animal and plant health issues involving U.S. agricultural exports. Examples include:

Spearheaded a 6-month pilot program with China’s animal and plant health authority which established the resumption of log exports from Virginia and South Carolina, resulting in more than $1.5 million in U.S. hardwood log exports to China from those States. The pilot program was recently extended by China. The pilot program signals renewed Chinese confidence in Virginia and South Carolina forestry exports. The United States exported more than $7.7 billion in forestry products in 2011, supporting more than 65,000 jobs. During the first eleven months of 2012, U.S. log exports to China from all states reached nearly $730 million. Nearly 25 percent of those exports landed in China, the second largest market for U.S. timber. Seaports in Virginia and South Carolina handled more than half-a-billion-dollars in U.S. forestry exports in 2011.

Worked with Mexican officials to spur U.S. table eggs exports to Mexico valued at $45 million per year.

Secured Japanese market access for poultry and poultry products from New York, Ohio and South Dakota. In 2011, U.S. poultry exports to Japan totaled $88 million.

Supported the shipment of U.S. cattle to new markets in 2012 by engaging foreign counterparts in preparation for exports and approving seven temporary export inspection facilities to supplement the agency’s permanent export facilities, reducing the distance cattle traveled before export and helping exporters meet shipping deadlines. Turkish and Russian purchases alone during fiscal year 2012 were valued at roughly $300 million.

Secured the release of 324 shipments of U.S. agricultural products detained at foreign ports, valued at more than $41 million. For example, APHIS recently secured the release of seven grain shipments valued at $1.8 million from the port of Haiphong, Vietnam, and the agency continues to work with Vietnamese officials and the U.S. grain industry on a permanent solution that will keep exports moving efficiently to that market.
There are approximately 170 Foreign Service officers in USDA’s Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS), staffing 98 offices covering 162 countries. U.S. farmers, ranchers, trade associations and private companies depend on FAS staff to guide them through export of their products. FAS provides reports on hot market prospects and offers expertise when trade barriers arise. Over the past year, FAS has helped to knock down hundreds of barriers to trade. Examples include:

- Negotiated the release of hundreds of detained shipments in dozens of countries, valued at well over $60 million, and ranging from soybean meal in Latvia, to white zinfandel in the EU, rice bran pellets in Norway, Massachusetts scallops in Spain, and U.S. meat and poultry products in Taiwan.
- Began implementing trade agreements with South Korea, Colombia and Panama, ensuring duty free access for a wide variety of U.S. food and farm products expected to boost U.S. agricultural exports by more than $2.3 billion per year when fully implemented, and support nearly 20,000 domestic jobs in the process.
- Engaged with China on a memorandum of understanding on soybean trade that prevented disruptions to over $12 billion of U.S. exports. Maintained market access for U.S. dairy - valued at over $432 million in 2012 - by coordinating a draft dairy export certificate with the government of China.
- Spearheaded negotiations with Indonesia to exempt countries with food safety recognition, including the United States, from new restrictions on a variety of imported fruit and vegetables. U.S. fresh fruit exports to Indonesia were $110 million in 2012.
- Helped to negotiate the organic equivalence arrangement with the European Union. This partnership between the two largest organic-producers in the world will establish a strong foundation from which to promote organic agriculture, benefiting the growing organic industry and supporting jobs and businesses on a global scale.
- Engaged with India on a measure likely to have halted U.S. apple and pear exports valued at nearly $110 million annually.

Expanded market access for U.S. potatoes in Asia, and positioned U.S exporters to take advantage of the U.S.-Korea Trade Agreement that permits duty-free entry of up to 3,000 metric tons of U.S. potatoes each year. Last year, the United States exported $7 million of fresh potatoes to Korea.

Worked with Mexico to remove a 16 percent tax on dehydrated U.S. cranberries that had been erroneously applied for two months.

The Obama Administration, with Agriculture Secretary Vilsack’s leadership, has aggressively worked to expand export opportunities and reduce barriers to trade, helping to push agricultural exports to record levels. U.S. agriculture is currently experiencing its best period in history thanks to the productivity, resiliency, and resourcefulness of our producers and agribusinesses. Today, net farm income is at record levels while debt has been cut in half since the 1980s. Overall, American agriculture supports 1 in 12 jobs in the United States and provides American consumers with 83 percent of the food we consume, while maintaining affordability and choice. Strong agricultural exports contribute to a positive U.S. trade balance, create jobs, boost economic growth and support President Obama’s National Export Initiative goal of doubling all U.S. exports by the end of 2014.
Upcoming Events

USDA’s 2013 Agricultural Outlook Forum
Crystal Gateway Marriott
Arlington, Virginia

PUBLIC
Full Registration – 2 day
Package: $375
(Incl. 2 luncheons, dinner & coffee breaks)

PUBLIC
One day Registration
Package: $275
(Incl. 1 luncheon & coffee breaks)

USDA Employees

News Media
Prices increased January 21, 2013

Group Registrants: You may register up to 15 registrants consecutively online. Questions? Please call 1-877-572-6043 or email: usda@ameetingplace.com.

For hotel reservations, please call 877-212-5752 and reference the USDA AG Forum.

FLORIDA AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL UNIVERSITY

AG Discovery 2013 June 9 –22, 2013
AG Tech Century 21 July 14-19, 2013

Ag Discovery: Students will live on the campus of Florida A&M University and work with a variety of animal species. In addition, students are exposed to opportunities in animal science to help them better understand and refine their career paths. Funding provided by USDA/APHIS’ Animal Care program.

Ag Tech Century 21: Non-residential Enrichment Program- is a local outreach summer program to help middle to high school students learn about careers in agricultural sciences through experiential learning. Funding provided by USDA/NIFA.

For more information, contact:
Carmen Lyttle-N’guessan, M.S., M.Ed.,
(850) 412-5363
carmen.lyttlenguessa@famu.edu

Dr. Ray Mobley
(850) 599-3546
ray.mobley@famu.edu

Feel free to log on to the website, www.famu.edu/herds

Contact Alex Bolques for more information on these upcoming events at (850) 875-7225:

- Beekeeping in the Panhandle, February 18, 25, March 4 and 11 via distance learning
- Applying Pesticides Correctly: CORE (Draft requesting 4 CEU’s), February 25th
- Turf Tuesdays, February 26, March 5, 12, and 19 via distance learning
- CEU Round-up (As an alternate to our annual Private Applicator training) February 27 via distance learning, 5 CEU’s in either Private, Ag Row or Demo & Research
WASHINGTON, Feb. 13, 2013 — The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has designated 27 counties in Georgia as primary natural disaster areas due to damages and losses caused by the recent drought.

The counties are:

“Our hearts go out to those Georgia farmers and ranchers affected by recent natural disasters,” said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. “President Obama and I are committed to ensuring that agriculture remains a bright spot in our nation’s economy by sustaining the successes of America’s farmers, ranchers, and rural communities through these difficult times. We’re also telling Georgia producers that USDA stands with you and your communities when severe weather and natural disasters threaten to disrupt your livelihood.”

Farmers and ranchers in the following counties in Georgia also qualify for natural disaster assistance because their counties are contiguous. Those counties are:
Atkinson * Charlton * Dougherty * Lee * Bacon * Clinch * Jefferson * Mitchell * Berrien * Colquitt * Jenkins * Pierce * Bryan Cook * Johnson * Thomas * Bulloch * Crisp * Lanier * Ware * Burke * Dodge * Laurens * Wilcox

Farmers and ranchers in the following counties in Florida also qualify for natural disaster assistance because their counties are contiguous. Those counties are:
Columbia * Hamilton * Jefferson * Madison * Nassau

All counties listed above were designated natural disaster areas Feb. 13, 2013, making all qualified farm operators in the designated areas eligible for low interest emergency (EM) loans from USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA), provided eligibility requirements are met. Farmers in eligible counties have eight months from the date of the declaration to apply for loans to help cover part of their actual losses. FSA will consider each loan application on its own merits, taking into account the extent of losses, security available and repayment ability. FSA has a variety of programs, in addition to the EM loan program, to help eligible farmers recover from adversity.

The Obama Administration remains committed to helping the thousands of farm families and businesses struggling with natural disasters. Actions taken by Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack in 2012 to provide assistance to producers impacted by the drought included:

Extended emergency grazing on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres, freeing up a record 2.8 million acres and as much as $200 million in forage and feed for ranchers during a challenging time. Purchased $170 million of pork, lamb, chicken, and catfish for federal food nutrition assistance programs, including food banks, to help relieve pressure on American livestock producers and bring the nation's meat supply in line with demand. Reduced the emergency loan rate, from 3.75 percent to 2.125 percent, as well as making emergency loans available earlier in the season. Allowing haying or grazing of cover crops without impacting the insurability of planted 2013 spring crops. USDA worked with crop insurance companies to provide flexibility to farmers, and one-third of all policyholders took advantage of the extended payment period. Authorized $16 million in existing funds from the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) and Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) to target states experiencing exceptional and extreme drought. Transferred $14 million in unobligated program funds into the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) to help farmers and ranchers rehabilitate farmland damaged by natural disasters and for carrying out emergency water conservation measures in periods of severe drought. Authorized haying and grazing of Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) easement areas in drought-affected areas where haying and grazing is consistent with conservation of wildlife habitat and wetlands. Lowered the penalty on CRP acres used for emergency haying or grazing, from 25 percent to 10 percent in 2012. Simplified the Secretarial disaster designation process and reduced the time it takes to designate counties affected by disasters by 40 percent.

Additional programs available to assist farmers and ranchers include the Emergency Conservation Program, Federal Crop Insurance, and the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program. Interested farmers may contact their local USDA Service Centers for further information on eligibility requirements and application procedures for these and other programs. Additional information is also available online at http://disaster.fsa.usda.gov.
Dr. Robert Taylor, Dean of CAFS and Director of Land Grant Programs
Dr. Oghenekome Onokpise, Interim Associate Dean, Academic Programs
Vonda Richardson, Interim Director of Extension
Dr. Stephen Leong, Director, Viticulture Center
Dr. Cassel Gardner, Interim Director, Center for Air & Water Quality
Dr. Ray Mobley, Extension Veterinarian
Dr. Lawrence Carter, Director, Outreach Activities
Carmen Lyttle-N’guessan, Coordinator, Animal Healthcare/Veterinary Tech. Program
Renysha Harris, Coordinator, Administrative Services
Amelia Davis, Coordinator, Management Analysis/ * SDA Newsletter Editor
Rhonda Miller, Office Manager, Extension Administrator
Dr. Dreamal Worthen, Professor/ CRD
Sandra Thompson, Program Leader/Specialist of Community Resource Development
Angela McKenzie-Jakes, Ext. Animal Science Specialist/ Program Leader – Small Ruminant Program
Lue Jolly, Coordinator/Trainer EFNEP Program
Tondalaya Nelson, 4-H Youth Specialist
Gail Browning, Office Manager/Vehicles– Teleconference Center
Donna Salters, Coordinator Rural Entrepreneurial Outreach Program
Gilbert Queeley, Research Associate
Trevor Hylton, County Extension Agent (Leon & Wakulla)
Covey Washington, County Extension Agent (Jefferson)
Alex Bolques, Assistant Professor/Extension Agent II
Lester Murales, County Extension Agent (Gadsden)
Melva Morfaw, County Extension Agent (Madison)
Dr. Jennifer Taylor, Small Farms Specialist
Dr. Glen Wright, Director of Animal Health
Dr. Robert Purvis, Extension Veterinarian
Dr. Keawin Sergeant, Asst. Professor of Animal Science, Trainer- HACCP
Godfrey Nurse, Farm Manager
Cynthia Holloway, Vet-Tech Program Recruiter
Linda Sapp, Project Coordinator, Vet-Tech Program
Faith Clarke, Coordinator, OASDFR
Donna Swilley, Office Manager, Research & Extension Center
Carmita Whitehead, CYFAR Site Coordinator
Marian Gibbons, Communications Director
Cedric Spradley, IT Specialist
Dr. Jean Beaudouin, Assistant Professor/Animal Nutrition
Sonji West, EFNEP Program Assistant (Gadsden County)
Tonia Torres, EFNEP Program Assistant (Hillsborough County)
Maria Jones, EFNEP Program Assistant (Gulf County)
Jimonica Geri, EFNEP Program Assistant (Escambia County)