



Pfaff Encourages Farmers to Use USDA Resources To Help Deal with Crop Losses, Low Dairy Prices

Release Date: June 18, 2019

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MADISON – Secretary-designee Brad Pfaff is encouraging Wisconsin producers to take advantage of USDA-provided resources to assist both dairy and crop farmers facing the challenges of low prices and late planting.

Signup began Monday for the new Dairy Margin Coverage program, or DMC. In addition, crop farmers need to remember deadlines for reporting failed or prevented planting if they plan to claim coverage under federal programs.

Pfaff, who leads the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, said, “Many farmers are facing feed shortages because of alfalfa winterkill that resulted from very harsh winter weather this year, so they’re having to buy feed at high prices at the same time the milk prices are low.

“At the same time, many have been unable to get into their fields to replant alfalfa or other forage crops, or to plant corn and soybeans. And in some cases, they were able to plant, but the seeds or seedlings got washed away in this exceptionally wet spring. They need relief, and we strongly encourage them to take the steps to work with the USDA and recover at least some of their losses.”

The DMC program pays dairy producers when the difference between the all-milk price and the average feed price falls below a dollar amount selected by the producer. It provides catastrophic coverage at no cost, other than an annual \$100 fee that may be waived, and offers higher buy-up coverage. It replaces the Margin Protection Program. Resources are available to help farmers make their decisions:

- [USDA webinar](#) This webinar was recorded Monday, June 17, and is available online. (<https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/outreach-and-education/webinars/index>)
- [USDA website](#) This site explains the program and provides links to other resources. (<https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/dairy-margin-coverage-program/index>)
- [University of Wisconsin Extension](#) This page explains the program briefly, with examples of coverage, and provides state-level resources, and links to USDA information. (<https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/news/2019/06/06/extension-tools-for-dmc-coverage/>)

For failed or prevented plant acreage, farmers must report losses within 15 days of the event that caused the loss or when it becomes apparent. The final planting dates vary by crop and location. Farmers need to contact local Farm Service Agency offices to file a notice of loss.

“These resources are there to be used,” Pfaff says. “They can make a difference. As always, we also encourage you to call our Wisconsin Farm Center, 1-800-942-2474 if you need help dealing with financial issues and other stress. It’s a difficult time on farms, but farmers are smart and resilient. Relying on the help available helps you be resilient.” ###

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