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McIntosh, Minnesota



The Honorable Jeffrey Remick swore in Sheriff Jim Tadman for a second term on Tuesday, January 3, 2023.

Sheriff Jim Tadman sworn in for second term

Sheriff Jim Tadman, surrounded by family and colleagues, was sworn in by The Honorable Jeffrey Remick for his second term as the Polk County Sheriff on January 3rd, 2023. The sheriff is the highest-ranking law enforcement officer in the county.

Sheriff Tadman is the 24th Polk County Sheriff and has been a member of the Polk

County Sheriff's Office since 1988.

Sheriff Tadman is committed to promoting mutual respect between the Sheriff's Office and our community.

Some key issues he will focus on in this term are the growing mental health and controlled substance issues, and the recruitment, retention, and training of public

safety professionals.

Sheriff Tadman stated he is grateful to the citizens of Polk County for their show of confidence and support.

He would like to thank the Polk County Sheriff's Office staff for their team effort and their continued commitment and dedication to keep our communities safe.

Ways to appreciate law enforcement all year long

Monday, January 9th was National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day. for 2023.

A day created to thank the more than 900,000 law enforcement officers across the country who risk their lives to protect their communities. These brave men and women put on a badge each day, knowing they may face dangerous situations while carrying out their duties.

Please join in thanking all law enforcement officers and especially our own deputies at the Polk County Sheriff's Office who protect and serve our communities making Polk County a safe place for our loved ones. "I am inspired by their dedication and proud to serve with them," says Polk County Sheriff Jim Tadman.

If you see an officer, you

can show your support with a simple thank you. "I know it will make their day," Tadman stated.

Monday was a special day, but how can you show our law enforcement officers appreciation anytime?

Citizens may wish them a simple "thank you," or may perform small acts of gratitude on their behalf, such as buying them a coffee.

Hand written letters of appreciation to your favorite officers are a simple way to say thank you in a long-lasting way. If there is a certain officer who has literally "saved your day," or who you've seen doing awesome acts of kindness around the community, or who is all around a great role model for the younger generations, now is your perfect chance to

express your sincere gratitude!

Support the blue through a donation to a local police charity. If there is a police foundation directly supporting your local department, you can make the donation in appreciation of some of your favorite officers.

Courage, bravery, hero, public servant. These are all words that come to mind when you think of an individual in law enforcement.

When someone answers the call to serve and protect, they are doing more than that. They are often sacrificing sleep, holidays with loved ones, and potentially their life for the safety and security of their community. They are deserving of appreciation throughout the year.

Looking back on the past year of 2022

April:
Ketanji Brown Jackson was confirmed as a Justice of the United States Supreme Court. Elon Musk proposes to acquire social media website Twitter for \$44 billion

The McIntosh Fire & Rescue Squad hosted the 131st Annual Fireman's Ball. The event was held on Saturday, April 9th. There was a steak and fried supper at the Fire Hall and live music at Little Bobby's Bar & Grill.

Win-E-Mac students Colten Mandt and Alexa Morberg participated in the U.S. Robotics tournament and finished with a record of 7 - 7.

A Night to Remember was held at the Win-E-Mac Arts & Events Center when girls ages 4 years old to 6th grade were

able to spend a special evening enjoying a meal and dancing with their dads or other important men in their life.

The McIntosh Community Club hosted the Annual Easter Egg Hunt at Roholt Park where kids were able to collect eggs filled with treats, enjoy refreshments and see the Easter Bunny.

The Randy Helgass Defensive Player of the year awards went to Kiersten Anderson for girls junior varisty volleyball, Emily Strom for girls Varsity Volleyball, Kaleb Morberg for boys junior varsity football and Dorian Fadet for boys varsity football.

Flooding becomes a grave issue with East Polk County residents as roads wash out and water covers roads due to snow

melting and an influx of rain.

May:
In Uvalde, Texas a gunman killed 19 students and two teachers at Robb Elementary Schoolmaking it the third-deadliest school shooting in U.S. history.

"The Very Great Grandson of Sherlock Holmes" was performed at Win-E-Mac Arts & Events Center. This play, directed by Bruce McWilliam forty-one years ago, featured Joel Kangas in the Holmes role, now reprised by his son, Jadon.

The Win-E-Mac School vocal music department presented their annual all-school choir concert on Thursday, May 12, 2022.

Review...
Continued on page 2...

Could above average snowfall provide drought relief in Minnesota?

Though some homeowners and commuters in Minnesota consider heavy snowfall an inconvenience, many are hoping this season's above average snow totals will provide drought relief in many parts of the state, after difficult years in 2021 and 2022.

Jeff Strock, a professor at the U of M's Southwest Research and Outreach Center, provides expert comment on how heavy snowfall is expected to impact soil and drought in 2023.

"While above average snowfall may be perceived as a positive for addressing drought, the reality is that it depends. It's important to remember that snow is not as effective as rain for addressing drought conditions. As a rule of thumb, only about 25% of the water from melting snow will infiltrate the soil.



Jeff Strock, a professor at the U of M's Southwest Research and Outreach Center, provides expert comment on how heavy snowfall is expected to impact soil and drought in 2023.

If the spring snowmelt is fast and the ground is still frozen, very little if any moisture available from the snow will get into the soil for recharge.

A fast melt in the spring, on frozen soil, could result in localized flooding, however, there is a lot of storage capacity in rivers, marshes and sloughs because they dried up during the drought.

If the spring thaw is relatively slow, some of the moisture from the melting snow will infiltrate the soil.

A slow spring melt would help provide decent conditions for planting and germination of seed."

Jeff Strock is a professor in the Department of Soil, Water & Climate and works at the Southwest Research and Outreach Center. His areas of interest include soil hydrology, water quality and fertility. His research and outreach activities focus on soil hydrology, agricultural drainage and nutrient management in agricultural systems.

In most areas of Minnesota, the ground is frozen. The official frost depth as of Tuesday, January 3 at the Southwest Research & Outreach Center

in Lamberton was 22 inches, which is similar to the same time last year.



Bob Olson, Dan Jore, Don Killian, Danny Peterson and Bob Lee spend some time visiting during the First National Bank of McIntosh Open House on Friday, December 16th.



Shop With A Hero 2022 was a success. Local public safety stars partnered with Wal-Mart in Crookston and sponsored the Shop With A Hero event 2022. The Polk County Sheriff's Office was joined by the Crookston Police Department, City of Crookston Fire Department, The National Guard Armory, Crookston, and Crookston Area Ambulance, to take 21 children shopping. The kids had a public safety hero as their shopping buddy while they cruised through the store with their Wal-Mart gift cards. Their choices varied from toys and electronics to a few sugary treats. Some children purchased gifts for siblings. We spotted at least one Minnesota Vikings sweatshirt and stocking cap chosen proudly in support of their favorite team! Sheriff Jim Tadman stated that this event is something the deputies look forward to all year. We had a fantastic turnout with multiple heroes volunteering from the agencies listed above. Thank you Wal-Mart for making this special evening possible. It might be cold outside but our hearts are warm.

Review...

Continued from page 1

The Win-E-Mac Seniors celebrated their last month of high school by attending the annual Prom. This years theme was Enchanted Twilight. All prom attendees celebrated with a Grand March at 7:00 pm followed by a dance with pizza and refreshments from 8:00 pm to 11:00 pm

Cub Scout Pack 89 met on Tuesday, May 10th for their final badge ceremony. Pack 89 had four Webelos scouts earning their badge: Breelyn Hegre, Karl Jax, Ava Sharp, and Pavel Snegirev. Bears (third grade) earning their badge were Grafton Langemo, Silas Lee, Chandler Bailey, Henry Swanson, Dean Morin, and Cory Dibblee. Wolves (second grade) earning their badge were Bridger Huschle, Emmett Rock, and Jen Stordahl. Tigers (first grade) earning their badge were Adler Stordahl, Macey Lee, Carter Bartz, and Roman Snegirev. Additional scouts also participated throughout the year earning various adventure loops

Win-E-Mac took the time to honor the senior scholarship recipients, their academic achievements, and presented special awards in fine arts and athletics during the AAA Banquet held at the Arts & Event

Center at the school.

The Class of 2022 graduated together with friends and family in attendance on Saturday, May 28th. The Win-E-Mac Class of 2022 Valedictorian, was Teagan Paulson and Alivia Winter was the Salutatorian. The Win-E-Mac Class of 2022 chose to have Mr. Doug Johnson as the guest speaker at their graduation ceremony on Saturday, May 28th. Mr. Johnson has spent the last 41 years teaching students and will retire this year.

The Winger American Legion Fengestad-Solie Post 200 hosted its' annual Memorial Day program beginning at 8:30 am at the Winger Community Center. The program will conclude in the Memorial park at 9:00 am with the laying of the wreaths and the 21 gun salute and taps.

Friends of McIntosh Veterans hosted the 2022 Memorial Day Service on May 30th with the Parade starting at 10:15 and Program with speaker Craig Burslie that followed. This year was in-person at the McIntosh Community Center. The day started with a short parade with the Color Guard, Win-E-Mac Band and the wreath program kids followed the presentation at the Com-

munity Center.

June:

Roer vs. Wade was overturned by the United States Supreme Court. Depp vs. Heard: A jury in Virginia finds both Amber Heard and Johnny Depp liable for defamation; Depp is awarded \$15 million while Heard is awarded \$2 million.

As we kicked off summer with the Erskine Water Carnival, the Win-E-Mac Alumni Association presented an All-School Reunion the weekend of June 3rd through the 5th, which had events in both Erskine and McIntosh. There was plenty to do and plenty of friends and past school mates that met up with and enjoyed a fun-filled weekend, ending with a parade down the main streets of both towns.

The 2022 Winger Lions Fish Fry will took place on Saturday, June 25th at the Winger Community Center

Freedom Christian Academy hosted Breakfast on the Farm at the Breckel Farm, Hilltop Ranch, north of McIntosh. There were pancakes, ponies to ride, music and lots of activities for kids along with some local businesses that set up to sell products and donated their profits to the school.

Medicare 101 virtual class

There is a lot to do when you become eligible for Medicare and it can seem overwhelming. Minnesota's Senior LinkAge Line® offers a class giving you answers. The Senior LinkAge Line Medicare 101 class is for people new to Medicare and would like to learn about Medicare Parts A, B, C and D. Topics include a comprehensive introduction to Medicare including what Medicare covers, supplemental insurance and Part D prescription coverage. During class, you will find out how to get the most from your benefits and how to research your Medicare plan options using the Medicare.gov site. Space is limited, to attend

please register online at www.dancingskyaaa.org or call Senior LinkAge Line at 1-800-333-2433.

WHAT: New to Medicare Virtual Class

WHEN: Thursday, January 19th, 2023 from 2:00 PM – 4:00 p.m.

WHERE: Online Virtual Class

REGISTRATION: www.dancingskyaaa.org

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: January 16th 2023

The Senior LinkAge Line® is a free statewide service of the Minnesota Board on Aging in partnership with Minnesota's Area Agencies on Aging. The Senior LinkAge Line

helps older Minnesotans and caregivers find answers and connect to the service and support they need. Call the Senior LinkAge Line at (800)-333-2433, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or visit www.MinnesotaHelp.info to chat with a specialist during business hours.

McIntosh

Community Calendars

McIntosh Community Calendars are now available at the First National Bank of McIntosh. There are plenty for sale and the price is still \$6. Pick up yours today!



ST. MARY'S CHURCH
Fosston
Fr. John Suvakeen,
Pastor

Wed. Jan. 11: Noon - 8:00pm Adoration

Sun. Jan. 15: 8:00am Confession; 8:30am Mass at St. Mary's, Fosston; 10:30am Mass at St. Joseph's, Bagley

Wed. Jan. 18: Noon - 8:00pm Adoration

Sun. Jan. 22: 8:00am Confession; 8:30am Mass at St. Mary's, Fosston; 10:30am Mass at St. Joseph's, Bagley

OURS SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH (ELCA)
McIntosh

Interim Pastor Keith Zeh
Synodical Authorized Minister Katie DeMarais

Sun. Jan. 15: 10:00am Coffee Hour; 10:30am Worship Services

Sun. Jan. 22: 10:00am Coffee Hour; 10:30am Worship Services

Our Saviors Lutheran Church, McIntosh will run church services on Channel 30 on Garden Valley Channel 30. They will also be available on YouTube on channel One in Spirit - The Journey. Our Saviors service will be available by 8:30 am each Sunday until further notice.

MCINTOSH AFLC
McIntosh Trinity / Mount Carmel:
Interim Pastors John Anderson and Phil Rokke

Sunday Services
11:00am Mt Carmel
9:30am Trinity
Sunday School
10:45am Trinity
9:45am Mt. Carmel

GOSEN LUTHERAN CHURCH
Independent
Gary Johnson, Pastor
www.gosen-church.com
Face Book: Gosen Church

Sun, Jan. 15: 9:30am. Sunday School and Adult Bible Study; 11:00am Worship Service (also on Facebook and gosenchurch.com)

Tues, Jan. 17: 10:00am. Sunday worship service telecast on GVTV--30

Wed, Jan. 18: 6:30pm Bible Study at Sharon Ramberg's home

Gosen Church is located 4 miles south of the junctions of Highways 2 & 59 or 4 miles north of Winger; then 1/2 mile east on County Road 206. For information call 268-4242 or 687-3461.

VERNES LUTHERAN CHURCH (LCMC)
McIntosh
Pastor Lee Laaveg

Sun. Jan. 15: 9:00am Worship
Sun. Jan. 22: 9:00am Worship

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
McIntosh
Pastor Bruce Blocker,

Sundays: 9:00am Worship; 10:00am Fellowship Hour; 10:15am Sunday School

CALVARY LUTHERAN CHURCH
Winger

Sundays: 9:45am Sunday School; 10:00am Coffee Fellowship; 10:30am Worship

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH-NALC
Erskine
Rev. Pam Thorson

Sundays: 10:30am Worship

Please contact the McIntosh Times if you move or have a change in your address so we can keep the paper coming to your home on time.



Sandy Jore and grandson Crosby's names were both drawn for prizes during the First National Bank of McIntosh Christmas Open House held on Friday, December 16th.



Shirley and Allen Carver enjoy some snacks and visiting during the FNB Christmas Open House.

Habits that affect cognitive health

Various changes to appearance and health are associated with aging. Issues such as diminished vision, waning muscle strength and gray hairs are among the more common and noticeable side effects of aging. Cognitive decline is another symptom often associated with aging, even if that needn't be the case.

Certain lifestyle choices can protect against cognitive decline and dementias. While there is no surefire way to prevent dementias, here are some good habits for maintaining cognitive function well into your golden years.

Exercise frequently: Harvard Health reports that exercise, in addition to the many other benefits it provides, may help improve cognitive function in people who have already experienced memory issues. Exercise may be particularly advantageous to people who carry the APOE4 gene variant,

which makes people more susceptible to Alzheimer's. Speak with a doctor about how much exercise is needed and what is safe for your age.

Enjoy video games: Playing a favorite video game may improve long-term cognitive function. Researchers at Cambridge Brain Sciences found study participants who played non-cognitive-training video games were associated with better performance in several cognitive domains, but only for younger (age 18 to 64) participants. Cognitive training games, on the other hand, were not associated with any cognitive improvement.

Stay socially engaged: According to a study published in the journal Experimental Aging Research, seniors who have high levels of social engagement also have better cognitive function. Getting together with friends, participating in a club, attending religious

studies, and any other activity that gets you out with other people can help with cognitive function.

Eat a healthy diet: Eating a diverse array of healthy foods is beneficial. Nutritious diets can help reduce the risk for illnesses that may affect cognitive ability. Eating well also helps keep the brain healthy. A Mediterranean diet appears to lower the risk or slow the progression of dementia in people who have the condition.

Get help for sleep disorders: Lack of sleep can affect memory and learning. By getting help for sleep disorders, you may reduce your risk for cognitive issues.

While it is not possible to prevent or cure cognitive conditions like dementias with lifestyle changes, certain behaviors can lower the risk of developing these illnesses or reduce their severity.



Gloria Carver was the winner of one of the hams during the FNB Open House.



Ryan Johnson won a ham during the Christmas Open House held at First National Bank.

read or listen to four books – you can enter as many times as you wish. To participate, visit a library near you to pick up a reading log or participate virtually using the Beanstack website or mobile app.

You can register for the virtual version of the contest by visiting larl.org/bookblizzard or by downloading the mobile app for your Android or Apple device.

Book Blizzard is available from January 1st through February 28, 2023.

Lake Agassiz Regional Library is a consolidated public library system comprised of 13 branch libraries and nine LINK sites serving the residents of seven counties in northwest Minnesota. More information is available at www.larl.org.

Mac Library to close Jan. 16th

All Lake Agassiz Regional Library (LARI) branches and LINK sites will be closed on Monday, January 16 in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, with regular hours of operation resuming Tuesday, January 17.

Lake Agassiz Regional Library is a consolidated public library system comprised of 13 branch libraries and nine LINK sites serving the residents of seven counties in northwest Minnesota. More information is available at www.larl.org.

LSS
Meals Menu
687-2262

Call to reserve your meal. Indoor dining at 11:30 am; drive-up available at 11:00 am.

Mon. Jan. 16: Closed

Tues. Jan. 17 *Bingo*
Chicken Ala King over Butter-milk Biscuits - Peas & Carrots - Pineapple Tidbits - Cinnamon Rolls - Milk

Wed. Jan. 18: Beef Macaroni Hotdish - Lettuce Salad - Tropical Fruit - Garlic Breadsticks - Fruit Crisp - Milk

Thur. Jan. 19: *Bingo*
A.S. Bank Day: Presentation 10:45am - Estate Planning by attorney Stephanie Harbott (must reserve meal by noon on Wednesday, January 18th)
Pork Loin - Gravy - Sweet Potatoes - Broccoli Normandy - Wheat Rolls - Banana Bars - Milk

Fri. Jan. 20: Lemon Pepper Fish Fillet - Baked Potato - Creamy Coleslaw - Wheat Bread - Apple Crisp - Milk

Community
Birthday and
Anniversary
Calendar

Thurs. Jan. 12:
Julie Schow, Amanda Roue, Sydnee Ogaard
Fri. Jan. 13: *Les & Mavis Finseth
Sat. Jan. 14: Jan Galland
Mon. Jan. 16:
Connor Johnson, Merlene Vennes
Tues. Jan. 17:
Isaac Schlager, Stephanie Halland

McINTOSH Times

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MFU outlines policy priorities for 2023 session

Minnesota Farmers Union (MFU) looks forward to working with the Walz-Flanagan administration and Minnesota's legislators in the 2023 legislative session to make Minnesota an even better place to farm, raise a family and grow a business.

MFU will advocate for policy set by its grassroots membership. Members brought forth resolutions at their county conventions late last summer and into fall. Those resolutions were combined and debated by elected delegates from across the state during the annual convention in November. Delegates established Special Orders of Business to guide legislative work this year. The orders include:

Making health care affordable and accessible, including expanding MinnesotaCare through a public 'buy-in' option that will improve choices in rural Minnesota and lower costs through competition.

"As small business owners, family farmers disproportionately purchase health insurance on the private market and are hit hard by high premiums and lack of choice between health plans in rural areas," said MFU President Gary Wertish. "This cuts into their farm income and pushes too many farmers to consider giving up the farm, seeking a second off-farm job with insurance, or going without health coverage all together—a decision that could prove financially devastating. We've advocated to expand MinnesotaCare

through an affordable buy-in option and feel strongly that this is the year we can finally take this important step for farmers and other small business owners."

Limiting corporate control and ensuring competitive markets by defending Minnesota's Corporate Farm Law, strengthening Minnesota's antitrust laws, funding capacity at the state Attorney General's office to bring cases against companies who use their power to abuse farmers, consumers, and workers; strengthening prohibitions against mergers and passing Right to Repair.

Expanding local and regional processing by continuing to support meat processing training programs at technical colleges, supporting incentives for employee retention, funding state meat inspection services and establishing a certification navigator position, and working across government to establish financing options, develop model business plans, provide technical assistance, streamline regulations and permitting, and otherwise make it easier to start a new meat processing business.

Creating climate resilience by establishing and expanding voluntary publicly funded conservation programs that offer incentives for on-the-ground practices that promote soil health and improve the climate, funding alternative crop research at land-grant universities, removing the sales tax on fencing equipment and establishing other incentives

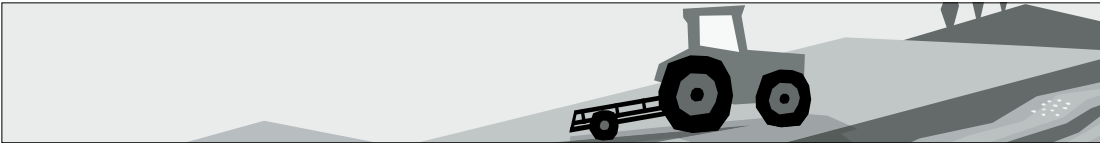
for grazing, and expanding the use of biofuels.

"We understand there are many demands on the state budget, but we believe in supporting family farmers, the foundation of Minnesota's economy," Wertish said. "Minnesota's farmers generate \$112 billion in economic impact and support 430,000 jobs, but their livelihood is threatened by extreme weather, lack of market access and rising health care costs. We believe that growing the state's investment in family farmers and supporting agriculture will help build a farm and food system that is more resilient, distributed, and fair not only for farmers, but also for workers and consumers."

In addition to these priorities, MFU will continue to advocate for a grain indemnity fund this session.

"We strongly believe that to adequately protect producers and create a fair regulatory system for buyers, any changes to the grain program must include an indemnity fund," Wertish wrote in a letter to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. "Too many families have been hurt by elevator failures to continue to leave farmers without real protection. . . . We feel strongly about this issue, because our members and others who market grain are among the least protected in the nation."

The 2023 Minnesota legislative session began Jan. 3 and must end by May 22.



Applications open for funding to help new farmers purchase land

Qualified farmers will receive dollar-for-dollar matching money up to \$15,000.

Applications are now being accepted for a new grant program to support Minnesotans purchasing their first farm. The Down Payment Assistance Grant Program is managed by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) and offers dollar-for-dollar matching up to \$15,000 for qualified small farmers to purchase farmland.

The MDA's Rural Finance Authority (RFA) is awarding this funding using a first-come, first-served application process that will open at 9 a.m. on January 4, 2023. The Minnesota Legislature appropriated \$500,000 in Fiscal Year 2023 for these grants. The RFA expects to award between 30 and 40 grants in this cycle, depending on the size of requests. A second cycle of \$750,000 in funding has been secured and will be made available on July 1, 2023.

Farmers must be Minnesota residents who will earn less than \$250,000 annually in gross agricultural sales and plan on providing the majority of the day-to-day physical labor on the farm for at least

five years. Applicants must not have previous direct or indirect farmland ownership.

Applications will continue to be accepted until a waitlist of 100 applicants forms, or May 15, 2023, whichever comes first.

Approved applications will remain valid for purchases closing within 90 days of approval or until May 15, 2023, whichever comes first.

The application and more information on the Down Payment Assistance Grant can be found at <https://www.mda.state.mn.us/down-payment-assistance-grant-program>.

USDA announces major program improvements, progress, & investments

At the American Farm Bureau Federation annual convention, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced several major developments at the U.S. Department of Agriculture that will benefit farmers, ranchers and producers across the nation.

"At USDA, our goal is to provide all farmers, including new and underserved producers, with the opportunity to receive the assistance they need to continue farming, to build and maintain their competitive-edge, and to access more, new, and better markets," said Vilsack, who spoke at the American Farm Bureau Federation annual convention today. "Working together we can ensure American agriculture is as resilient as ever and will do so by implementing a holistic approach to emergency assistance, by lowering input costs through investments in domestic fertilizer production, and by promoting competition in agricultural markets."

The USDA continues to make progress in the following areas by:

- Assisting producers facing high input costs to access domestic, innovative fertilizer capacity.
- Improving risk protection for underserved producers.
- Investing in new choices and meat processing capacity for livestock producers.
- Providing relief for producers impacted by disaster and the pandemic.

USDA Moving Forward with Fertilizer Production Expansion Program; Publishes Comments on Importance of Increased Competition

USDA will soon begin accepting public comments on environmental and related aspects of 21 potentially viable projects to increase fertilizer production across the United States totaling up to \$88 million. These applicants have requested grant funding through the first round of the Department's newly established Fertilizer Production Expansion Program. USDA continues to create a competitive, resilient, secure and sustainable economy to support opportunities for local businesses and people across this nation. The Fertilizer Production Expansion Program is a critical part of that effort.

The Department is considering fertilizer production projects in Alabama, Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Ohio, Oregon, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin. In response to prior feedback requesting more time for public comment on the environmental and related impact of USDA-funded projects, USDA is seeking comments from the public on the following questions and projects pertaining to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA). The 30-day public comment period will close February 8, 2023. Additional information is available at www.rd.usda.gov/fpep-environmental-review-comments.

The Fertilizer Production Expansion Program is part of a whole-of-government effort

to promote competition in agricultural markets. USDA has also released a summary of the comments received through a Request for Information on Access to Fertilizer: Competition and Supply Chain Concerns, which highlights the variety of concerns about the limited competition and dependence of foreign sources for significant amounts of fertilizer.

Improving Risk Protection for Beginning, Veteran, Limited Resource and Minority Producers

The Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) provides financial assistance to producers of non-insurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory or prevented planting occur due to natural disasters. There is a Congressionally mandated fee waiver for basic coverage for underserved producers. However, a previous set of procedures and regulations created a paperwork burden that stood in the way of many producers taking advantage of the basic coverage option. The recent rule removes barriers and establishes procedures through which an underserved producer with a CCC-860, Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, Beginning and Veteran Farmer or Rancher Certification, on file prior to the applicable NAP application closing date will automatically receive basic coverage for any NAP-eligible crops they plant. Underserved producers on file for 2022 will also receive retroactive basic coverage. Like all other covered producers, underserved producers will still need to file a notice of loss and apply for benefits.

In addition to the basic catastrophic level coverage under NAP, producers can buy-up higher levels of coverage by paying a premium. Underserved producers receive a 50 percent discount on any premiums. Producers who are interested in obtaining NAP coverage for 2023 should also contact their local FSA county office for information on eligibility, coverage options and applying for coverage. FSA also plans to target outreach to previous producers of NAP-eligible crops to ensure these producers are aware of their options. For more information, reference our NAP Fact Sheet.

USDA Making More Investments in Meat and Poultry Processing

USDA is investing more than \$12 million to expand independent meat and poultry processing capacity in Ohio, Michigan and Minnesota. Vilsack announced that Meat and Poultry Processing Expansion Program grants will help fund the following projects:

In Ohio, International Food Solutions Inc. is receiving \$9,575,250 to help redevelop and expand a vacant building in Cleveland into a plant with the capacity to process 60 million pounds of poultry. The expansion will include cold and dry storage and two processing lines. The project will create 227 good-paying jobs. International Food Solutions is a woman- and minority-owned business that has produced thousands of prepared meals for K-12 students receiving free and reduced-price school meals.

In Michigan, grower-owned cooperative Michigan Turkey Producers is receiving \$1,531,204 to help upgrade the hot water system, wastewater treatment facilities and refrigerated trailers to accommodate an expansion at its plant in Grand Rapids. With recent automation upgrades and the continuing expansion made possible by the grant, the plant will be able to add a shift and double its processing capacity to 10 million turkeys annually. The additional capacity also will allow the plant to provide back-up for other facilities of similar size in neighboring states.

In Minnesota, Benson + Turner Foods Inc. is receiving \$962,954 to build a 6,788-square-foot cattle and hog processing plant on the White Earth Indian Reservation and storefront near Waubun. The grant will help the company achieve its goal of building a sustainable business that benefits the local economy by using locally grown livestock and providing new opportunities for producers to market their products by providing USDA-certified processing for them.

This is in addition to recent announcements of \$74 million in 22 MPPEP projects, \$75 million in grants through the Meat and Poultry Intermediary Lending Program, \$3.9 million in Value Added Producer Grants, and \$5.7 million in Food Supply Chain Loan Guarantees, all supporting meat and poultry processing. These programs are a few of the suite of programs facilitating investment in meat and poultry processing.

New Programs to fill gaps in 2020/2021 Natural Disaster Assistance (Emergency Relief Program (ERP) Phase 2) and 2020 Pandemic Assistance (Pandemic Assistance Revenue Program (PARP)).

USDA is announcing two new programs that wrap-up and fill remaining gaps in previous natural disaster and pandemic assistance. To be eligible for ERP Phase Two, producers must have suffered a decrease in allowable gross revenue in 2020 or 2021 due to necessary expenses related to losses of eligible crops from a qualifying natural disaster event. Assistance will be primarily to producers of crops that were not covered by Federal Crop Insurance or NAP, since crops covered by Federal Crop Insurance and NAP were included in the assistance under ERP Phase One.

To be eligible for PARP, an agricultural producer must have been in the business of farming during at least part of the 2020 calendar year and had a 15% or greater decrease in allowable gross revenue for the 2020 calendar year, as compared to a baseline year.

The ERP Phase 2 and PARP application period is open from January 23, 2023 through June 2, 2023. For more information, producers should contact their local USDA service center or reference the ERP Phase Two Fact Sheet, PARP Fact Sheet or the ERP Phase Two-PARP Comparison Fact Sheet.

To learn more, visit usda.gov.



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Jazmine and Hazel Burthwick were able to see Santa at the McIntosh Community Center on Saturday, December 17th during Santa Clause Day hosted by the McIntosh Community Club.

The Affordable Connectivity Program can help low income Americans get Internet access

Internet access is now necessary for work, school, health-care, and more. However, for many households, it remains unaffordable.

The Federal Communications Commission wants everyone to access reasonably priced internet services. We recently launched a new program to reduce the cost of getting online.

The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) provides a discount of up to:

- \$30 per month toward internet service for eligible households.
- \$75 per month for households on qualifying Tribal lands.

Eligible households can also receive a one-time discount of up to \$100 toward purchasing a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet from participating providers. To qualify for this one-time discount, households must contribute more than \$10 and less than \$50 toward the purchase price.

You can learn more about applying for ACP – and see if you're eligible for the discounts – on the ACP website.

Any household who receives Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is eligible to receive discounted internet service through the ACP. Social Security doesn't count ACP assistance as income or a resource for SSI purposes. Receipt of this assistance will not affect your SSI payment. You may also be eligible, if your household participates in other assistance programs, such as:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
- Medicaid.
- Federal Public Housing Assistance.
- Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).
- Lifeline.

If you don't receive SSI or participate in another qualifying assistance program, you may also be eligible if your household income is at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

There are additional ways to qualify. Go to our Affordable Connectivity Program page to learn more and apply. If you have questions, you'll find a consumer FAQ that can help, along with a list of participating internet service providers sorted by state.

Cost shouldn't be a barrier to getting online. Being connected can help you find job opportunities and access telehealth services, saving you time and transportation costs. And with affordable internet services, students no longer need to rely on public Wi-Fi hotspots to do their homework or for distance learning.

As of February 2022, more than 10 million households have already enrolled in the ACP program. That's an exciting threshold, but we know many more eligible households that are not yet enrolled. Please help us spread the word about ACP with your families, friends, neighbors, and co-workers.

For more information about the program, please email ACPinfo@fcc.gov or call 877-384-2575.

The ACP helps close the digital divide.

How students can prepare for standardized tests

Standardized tests remain a significant part of the academic experience for millions of students at all grade levels.

Though many colleges and universities no longer require the SAT or ACT for admission, experts note that many of those schools still value such tests and how applicants who choose to take them perform.

Students who want to take standardized tests can take various steps to ensure they do their best and make the decision to take the tests work to their advantage.

Prepare as if you're taking the test early. It's never too early for high school students to begin thinking about college. Students who plan to take standardized tests like the SAT and ACT are often urged to do so in their junior year of high school.

Such a timeline affords students ample time to retest if they feel they can improve their scores.

Though sophomore year might seem early to start preparing for the SAT and ACT, it's the perfect time to do so for students who plan to take the test in the first half of their junior year. This gives them ample time to find a tutor or test preparation program so they can perform their best.

Utilize preparation services. Standardized tests carry a lot of weight, even at schools that no longer require them, so professional test preparation services can be a good investment.

Parents can work with their children to find a tutor or preparation program in advance of their scheduled testing date. Some programs are lengthier and more intensive than others, but families can identify which type of program can most benefit the student. Some students may just need a post-summer refresher, while others may benefit from a more intensive program.

Look for free programs and resources. A student's school may offer a free test preparation program as testing season draws closer.

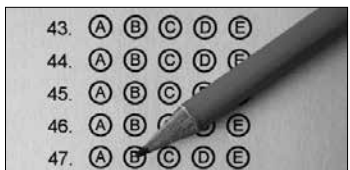
In addition, books on preparing for tests may be available for free at your local library. In the latter example, parents and students should confirm that any preparation guidebooks are up-to-date. Testing has changed significantly over the years, so students won't want to be looking over prep materials that no longer reflect modern tests.

Take practice tests. Practice tests can be invaluable.

Such tests can indicate where students are strong and any areas they should seek to improve. Students who have a tutor or are enrolled in a test prep program can go over their practice test results with their tutor or instructor to identify areas for improvement and strategies to perform better when the tests come.

Time your practice tests. Standardized tests like the SAT and ACT are timed. Students can prepare for that by taking timed practice tests. The more acclimated students become to testing situations, the better they're likely to perform.

Standardized tests can put pressure on students. One of the ways students can alleviate that pressure is to prepare for tests in advance so they're as comfortable as possible on the day of the test.



Winning the prize of a new sled during Santa Clause Day in McIntosh was Cannon Schow.



Dave and Wanda Stordahl and Charles Svalen were able to enjoy some visiting and a few snacks during the First National Bank of McIntosh Open House held on Friday, December 15th.



Dakota Hedlund won a sled in the drawing that took place during Santa Claus Day in McIntosh.



Clellie and Bud Kiecker visited with Peggy and Mark Hartel on Friday, December 16th during the First National Bank Christmas Open House.