



**National  
Barley  
Growers  
Association**

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## National Barley Growers Association



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### NBGA Leadership and State Representatives Attend U.S. Grains Council Meeting

NBGA President Greg Kessel, NBGA staff, and representatives of state barley groups attended or participated virtually in the U.S. Grains Council (USGC) board meeting held July 28-30 in Des Moines, Iowa. The general sessions featured numerous speakers, including a keynote from Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack. During the advisory team sessions, USGC staff provided updates on the global markets. The barley sector meeting included discussion on the status of barley and malt exports to Mexico and plans for an upcoming trade mission. The barley sector meeting also included an update from USGC staff in China on the market dynamics there and opportunities for future barley and malt sales.

### RMA Authorizes Emergency Procedures to Help Drought-Impacted Producers

On July 13<sup>th</sup> the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced the authorization of emergency procedures to help producers impacted by extreme drought conditions. USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) is working with

crop insurance companies to streamline and accelerate the adjustment of losses and issuance of indemnity payments to crop insurance policyholders in impacted areas.

These new crop insurance flexibilities are part of USDA's broader response to help producers impacted by drought, in the West, Northern Great Plains, Caribbean and other areas.

"Crop insurance helps producers weather natural disasters like drought," RMA Acting Administrator Richard Flournoy said. "We recognize the distress experienced by farmers and ranchers because of drought, and these emergency procedures will authorize insurance companies to expedite the claims process, enabling them to plant a new crop or a cover crop."

Emergency procedures allow insurance companies to accept delayed notices of loss in certain situations, streamline paperwork, and reduce the number of required representative samples when damage is consistent. These flexibilities will reduce burdens on both insurance companies and producers to help mitigate drought effects.

Producers should contact their crop insurance agent as soon as they notice damage. The insurance company must have an opportunity to inspect the crop before the producer puts their crop acres to another use. If the company cannot make an accurate appraisal, or the producer disagrees with the appraisal at the time the acreage is to be destroyed or no longer cared for, the insurance company and producer can determine representative sample areas to be left intact and maintained for future appraisal purposes. Once an insured crop has been appraised and released, or representative strips have been authorized for later appraisal, the producer may cut the crop for silage, destroy it or take any other action on the land including planting a cover crop. Additional information on these emergency procedures is available on RMA's *Crop Insurance and Drought Damaged Crop webpage*.

*[Click to read more...](#)*

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## House Ag Committee Passes Extension of WHIP+ Disaster Program

The House Agriculture Committee voted on July 27<sup>th</sup> to advance a WHIP+ Reauthorization Act (H.R. 267) to expand and extend WHIP+ for two years and authorize appropriations of \$8.5 billion for 2020 and 2021. The Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program Plus, (WHIP+) is a temporary program that provided assistance to producers for losses in 2018 and 2019. The funding is an authorization that is subject to appropriations, which could come later this year. The Senate Ag Committee has signaled its support for extending and expanding WHIP+ as well. The House bill also authorizes the WHIP+ Milk Loss Program and the On-Farm Storage Loss Program. It will maintain the causes of loss that were included for 2018 and 2019, including smoke taint in wine grapes due to wildfires; high winds; derechos; excessive heat; freeze and expands the drought trigger from D3 on the drought monitor to a Secretarial drought designation (which is D2 for eight consecutive weeks), or more severe, and contiguous counties.

The Administrative improvements in the bill include:

- Continued requirement that participants purchase crop insurance coverage of at least 60%, or NAP where insurance isn't available, for two years after receiving assistance
- Directs USDA to streamline the application process and to reduce the workload of county offices

- Use of net indemnities – under the existing WHIP+ rules, the payment calculation accounts for the actual value received and any gross crop insurance indemnity. The changes would account for the producer-paid premium in the calculation.
- Unharvested acres are treated in the same manner as under NAP.
- Mechanism for payments to producers through sugar processors and dairy coops.

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## House Passes FY22 Agriculture Appropriations Bill

The Fiscal Year 2022 Agriculture Appropriations bill was passed by the full House of Representatives as part of a package with several other appropriations bills.

The House bill will now wait for action by the Senate. The House Ag Appropriations bill includes an increase of \$1.5 million for the Barley Pest Initiative. The Report also includes NBGA's other funding priorities for the Wheat & Barley Scab Initiative and the Small Grains Genomic Initiative. Overall, the House proposal would increase annual discretionary funding for farm, food and rural programs by more than 10 percent. The measure totals \$26.55 billion, an increase of \$2.85 billion compared to current levels.

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## COVID Aid Boosts 2020 Farm Support

USDA's Economic Research Service issued estimates showing that farmers received *\$57.7 billion in total federal aid last year, more than 60% of which came from Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) and other COVID-19 relief programs*. Altogether, the COVID-related aid amounted to \$35.2 billion. Farm bill commodity and conservation programs accounted for \$13.1 billion in payments, and the Market Facilitation Program paid out \$3.7 billion in trade assistance in 2020. Farmers' net indemnities from crop insurance totaled \$5.7 billion. USDA's *2021 farm income forecast* expects direct government payments to drop by about 45% this year, bringing overall net farm income down about 8%. That would still be above average across the past 20 years, adjusted for inflation.

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## In Memoriam: Charlie Ottem

Charles I. Ottem, 74, of Osnabrock, ND, passed away on July 22. After serving in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam war, he took flight classes and also obtained an accounting degree. Charlie was very active in civic, political, and agricultural organizations. He is regarded as one of the first NBGA presidents, serving from 1985 to 1987. On behalf of barley growers, Charlie testified before Congress in 1986. He managed his own insurance agency and retired from farming in 2020. The National Barley Growers Association thanks Charlie for his many years of advocacy on behalf of farmers!

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