

Farmers can sign up for the USDA’s second round of Coronavirus Food Assistance Program

Press Release
Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Andy Gipson applauds the Trump administration and the U.S. Department of Agriculture on the second round of the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP 2), which will provide an additional \$14 billion dollars for agricultural producers who continue to face market disruptions and associated costs because of COVID-19. Signup for CFAP 2 began September 21 and will run through December 11, 2020.

“I encourage all of our farmers across the state to evaluate the impact of COVID-19 on their operations and consider whether this program could help in their recovery,” said Commissioner Gipson. “Additional commodities have been added to CFAP 2, and I thank the Trump administration for making these commodities eligible for the program.”

CFAP 2 payments will be made for three categories of commodities – Price Trigger Commodities, Flat-rate

Crops and Sales Commodities. Price trigger commodities are major commodities that meet a minimum five-percent price decline over a specified period of time. Flat-rate crops either do not meet the five-percent price decline trigger or do not have data available to calculate a price change. Sales commodities eligible for CFAP 2 include specialty crops, aquaculture, nursery crops and floriculture, and other commodities not included in the price trigger and flat-rate payment categories. The full list of eligible commodities outlined by payment category can be viewed at www.farmers.gov/cfap/commodities.

Under CFAP 2, there is a payment limitation of \$250,000 per person or entity for all commodities combined. Applicants who are corporations, limited liability companies, limited partnerships may qualify for additional payment limits when members actively provide personal labor or personal management for the farming operation. In ad-

dition, this special payment limitation provision has been expanded to include trusts and estates for both CFAP 1 and 2.

Producers will also have to certify that they meet the Adjusted Gross Income limitation of \$900,000 unless at least 75 percent or more of their income is derived from farming, ranching or forestry-related activities. Producers must also be in compliance with Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation provisions.

The application process for payments began on September 21. For a complete list of eligible commodities, payment rates and application submissions, producers should contact their local Farm Service Agency office or visit www.farmers.gov/cfap.

Online tutoring available for students through public libraries’ virtual service

Press Release
Mid-MS Regional Library System (MMRLS) is excited to introduce a free one-on-one virtual tutoring service for students of all ages and levels through the experts at Brainfuse HelpNow.

Public school, private school, homeschool and college students in Attala, Holmes, Leake, Montgomery and Winston County can begin accessing this new homework help resource on October 1.

The Brainfuse HelpNow service allows students to access on-demand, live tutoring (2 p.m. - 11 p.m.) with homework help available 24/7 throughout the year.

All students need to get started is a valid library card and PIN.

Students can learn at their own pace, in a relaxed one-on-one setting, at a time that is flexible and conve-



nient for them. All live tutoring sessions are saved and can be replayed as well as shared with friends and teachers. The subjects covered include math, reading, writing, science, social studies, and more!

“The library is dedicated to helping all students continue to learn, grow, and thrive. We believe the Brainfuse HelpNow live tutoring outreach service will benefit students, parents, and teachers in our communities during this time of distance learning and beyond.

We also have great digital resources already available with the state funded MAGNOLIA academic journal/magazine article database and the LearningExpress test/career prep database,” said Josh Haidet, Executive Director.

For more information, call or visit your local MMRLS branch library or the library’s website mid-misslib.com. All library services are made possible, thanks to the continued financial support of your elected officials.

Surely you can’t be (Cereus)

Goldenrod is blooming, and with early autumn colors hinting at the darkness to come it won’t be long before Daylight Saving Time ends and we’re left to reminisce on a porch swing or by the garden fire.

And I’m remembering what hardcore gardeners did during long, non-airconditioned evenings before television and the internet made self-entertainment easier.

Mostly we sat outside and murmured quietly, usually about the weather and how the sweet fragrance of evening-flowering four o’clocks powered over the smell of a coming rain.



FELDER RUSHING

And we made up stories. My favorite is a Victorian parlor game, a story about a wedding in which everything is a flower. Here’s part of it; if you’d like a copy of the whole thing, shoot me an email via my blog:

“Blackeyed Susan married Sweet William after he aster. There was a big crowd - phlox - to witness the bride given away by poppy as the groom’s mother whispered to him ‘forget me not.’ Jack in the pulpit officiated. Their new home will be on Cape Jasmine where they will live in sweet peas, hopefully with baby’s breath. Here’s hoping their passionflower doesn’t end up as touch me not!”

We also waited impatiently for Granny’s potted night-blooming cereus to slowly open its nocturnal

fantasy flowers. Eudora Welty did the same thing.

A classic passalong plant, the thornless tropical cactus has been shared endlessly between garden clubbers and their friends; its perfumed evening blossom, big as my hand, opens only at night and is wilted by morning.

Actually it isn’t a true Cereus, though the flowers look very similar. The real deal is a tall, candle-like, sun-loving cactus; the cascading kinds we call night blooming cereus, including the rick-rack or zig-zag cactus, are named Epiphyllum because, like Spanish moss and bromeliads, they’re epiphytes, meaning they naturally live on rainfall in trees with very little soil.

Pardon my corniness, but this conjures a paraphrased line from the comedic movie *Airplane*: “Surely you aren’t Cereus.” Now respond, in unison: “I AM serious, and stop calling me Shirley!”

Anyway, for over forty years I have grown “queen of the night” from cuttings from my great-grandmother, who every summer made us sit up until hers flowered. As the huge, breathtakingly fragrant flowers unfolded for just a few spectacular hours they are truly a cause for celebration.

Not that the plants themselves are much to look at; unkempt comes to mind. Unlike smaller, compact “Christmas cactus,” most are scraggly masses of



Surely you aren’t Cereus.

long, narrow, flat, sword-like stems with rounded “teeth” along wavy edges. The leaves, which are actually stems, are easy to cut into sections and root; most already have aerial rootlets growing from their midribs. They often bloom the first summer.

Unlike parasitic mistletoe, orchid cacti get all their nourishment from rain, bird drippings, and decomposed leaves caught in tree cavities where their roots grow for support, which is why the cold-sensitive shade plants are so easy to grow for years in small pots and brought indoors in the winter with little water or fertilizer.

While most folks settle for having a piece of the common white-flowering

form, several Internet sites offer rooted cuttings of pink, yellow, red, orange, or lavender cultivars with names like Moon Goddess, Black Knight, Texas Flame, Sugar Plum Fairy, Peach Madness, and Flamingo Dancer. There are even Epiphyllum societies.

I bet you can easily find a night blooming cereus cutting; trust me, there are folks near you who have it and will share as many cuttings as you’d like. And when yours blooms, create lasting memories by hosting a Queen of the Night party.

Felder Rushing is a Mississippi author, columnist, and host of the “Gestalt Gardener” on MPB Think Radio. Email gardening questions to rushingfelder@yahoo.com.

Sept. 25 Players of the Week
H. C. Central
Dandreyis “Deucey” Giles
JUNIOR
DEFENSIVE BACK/
WIDE RECEIVER
2 INTERCEPTIONS,
2 CATCHES FOR 70 YDS.
& 10 TACKLES

CHCS
Jace Dean
SENIOR
QB/WR/LB
12 CARRIES 58 YDS 2 TD’S
1 RECEPTION 68 YDS
1 TD
1 PASS COMPLETION 18 YDS
1 TD
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