



Recent Developments in Ad Hoc Assistance Programs for Agricultural Producers

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What Is the Issue?

Assistance to the agricultural sector is most commonly authorized in the Farm Bill. However, in recent years, successive ad hoc assistance programs were deployed for producers in response to unforeseen events, including extreme weather, retaliatory tariffs, and the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

What Did the Study Find?

- Ad hoc producer assistance programs accounted for an increasing share of Government support to producers in recent years, reaching \$21.3 billion in fiscal year (FY) 2021 or 42 percent of all budgetary support to producers that year.
- Although assistance in response to extreme weather events increased over this period, 81 percent of ad hoc assistance delivered from 2018 to 2022 was related to compensation for the effects of retaliatory tariffs and economic impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Ad hoc programs implemented over this period incorporated features designed to reduce potential reliance on ad hoc aid at the expense of enrollment in permanently authorized risk management programs, while also using available data to reduce processing times.
- The design of recent ad hoc producer assistance programs has varied depending upon the event and commodity affected. For programs responding to extreme weather impacts, payment formulas have been related to participation in crop insurance or the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), which provide compensation for extreme weather impacts. Other recent programs not related to extreme weather have based assistance on a variety of metrics, including cropped area, animal numbers, production, or lost income compared to historical levels.



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How Was the Study Conducted?

USDA, Economic Research Service (ERS) researchers compiled information on ad hoc assistance programs implemented for the 2017–22 period from program authorization documents and aggregate expenditure data. Sources included USDA’s Office of Budget and Program Analysis (OBPA) and USDA’s Farm Production and Conservation Business Center (FPAC), accessed through the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’s Producer Support Estimates database.