



ABILENE CHAMBER

DAILY BUSINESS BRIEF

Skimming the daily updates for your business so you don't have to.

CITY COUNCIL PREVIEW: NEW RESTAURANT AT ABILENE AIRPORT, DOWNTOWN PARKING CHANGES, AND LOCAL COVID-19 CONTROL

Abilene City Council members previewed several items that will be discussed during Thursday's meeting, including a new restaurant at the Abilene Airport, changes to downtown parking, and a letter in the works to get some local control during the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Read more.](#)

USDA CONFIRMS \$14B IN CFAP2 AID FOR FARMERS

On Friday morning, the U.S. Department of Agriculture confirmed details of its second tranche of coronavirus assistance payments for farmers. USDA will provide an additional \$14 billion for agricultural producers who continue to face market disruptions and associated costs because of COVID-19. Signup for the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) will begin Sept. 21 and run through Dec. 11, 2020.

USDA will use funds being made available from the Commodity Credit Corp. (CCC) Charter Act and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief & Economic Security (CARES) Act to support row crops, livestock, specialty crops, dairy, aquaculture and many additional commodities. USDA has incorporated improvements in tranche 2 of CFAP (CFAP 2) based from stakeholder engagement and public feedback to better meet the needs of the affected farmers and ranchers.

Producers can apply for CFAP 2 at USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) county offices. This program provides financial assistance that gives producers the ability to absorb increased marketing costs associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Producers will be compensated for ongoing market disruptions and assisted with the associated marketing costs.

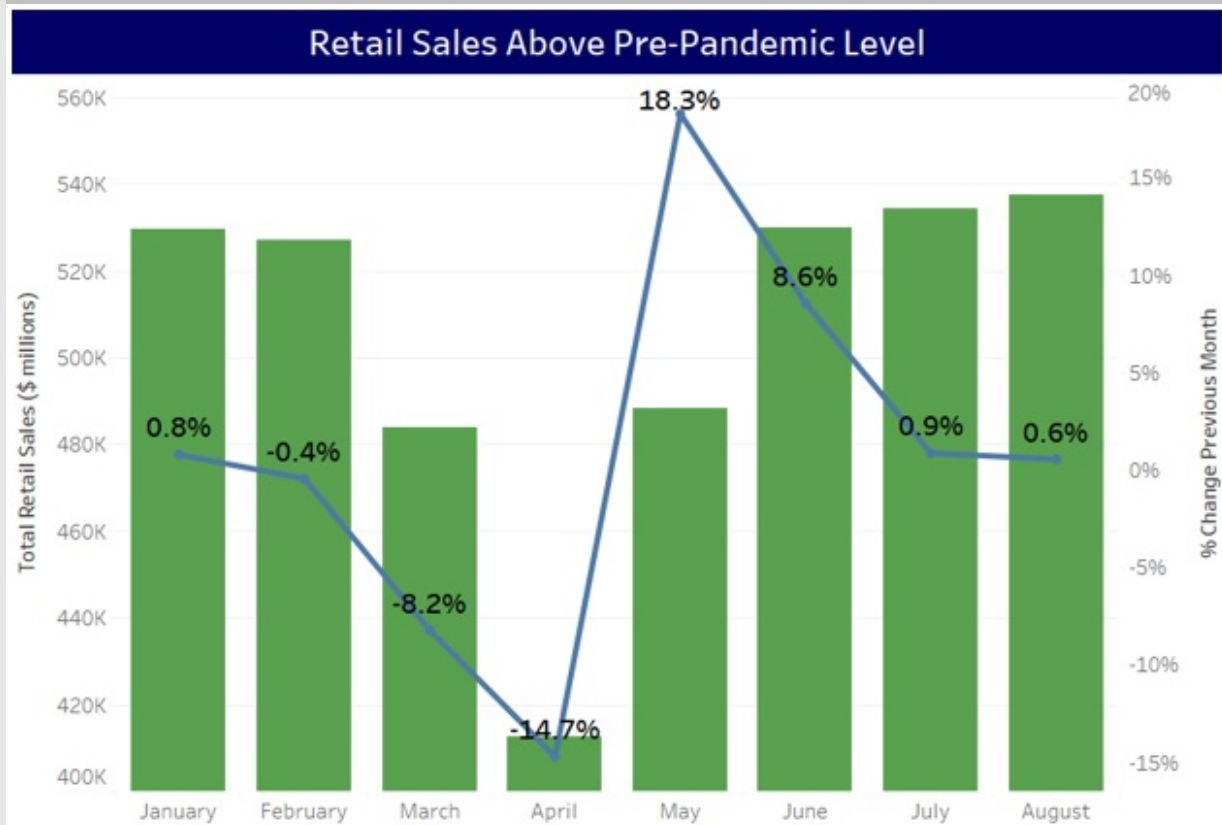
CFAP 2 payments will be made for three categories of commodities: price trigger commodities, flat-rate crops and sales commodities.

[Read more.](#)

GROWTH IN RETAIL SALES CONTINUES TO DRIVE THE RECOVERY

Retail sales continue to be the strongest economic data point in the recovery. There is no

doubt they are the accelerating line of the “K-shaped” recovery. The Census Bureau reported this week that [retail sales grew 0.6% in August](#), after growing 0.9% in July.



The initial surge: Those may look like small increases at first but consider retail sales grew over 18% in May and almost 9% in June. The strong growth in those months meant that retail sales already exceeded their February pre-pandemic levels back in June—faster than anyone expected.

Growth over the last two months, although slower, is still good news. It shows consumers are still spending and driving growth. It is also encouraging that sales did not decline after the extra \$600 per week unemployment benefits, pandemic relief payments, and some government support, expired in July. Many predicted a drop in sales once that support ended.

How'd that happen: The surge in savings during the pandemic and the improving labor market likely buoyed sales in August and blunted the effect of the benefits ending.

But wait: Although sales are recovering nicely, there is variation, and the “K-shaped” recovery applies. For instance, spending at grocery stores is up more than 12% for the year, while spending at restaurants and bars is down a whopping 21%. Spending at general merchandise stores is up 2.2% but spending at department stores is down almost 19%. Spending at gas stations and clothing stores is down 17% and 35%, respectively. But spending at building supply stores is up more than 11%. Sales at non-store retailers, mostly online sellers, is up almost 20%.

—Curtis Dubay, Senior Economist, U.S. Chamber of Commerce

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WHAT WE'RE READING

The German Secret to Getting More Done While Working Remotely

Researchers looking at how remote work is affecting our productivity and sanity have both good and bad news for those cooped up at home. The good news is that, for the short-term at least, people's productivity appears to be up. Without commutes and chatty colleagues, we're actually getting more done.

[Read more.](#)

How America's most beloved small businesses are enduring

To kick off Small Business Week, Inc. checks in with popular local merchants noted for engagement, community, and must-have offerings.

[Read more.](#)

***You don't want to miss these upcoming event for
your business.***

SEPT 23: VETERAN OWNED SMALL BUSINESS (VOSB) & SDVOSB TOO

Join Northwest Texas PTAC, Program Manager Rich Lyles as he provides you with a general understanding of how the VOSB & the Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business SDVOSB Program works. You'll learn about the benefits of being certified and the eligibility criteria required for certification. They'll discuss the formal certification through the VA as well as the self-certification option. **[Register here.](#)**

SEPT 23: RESOURCES FOR VETERAN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESSES & ENTREPRENEURS

Please join us for the next small business webinar, which will focus on veteran-owned businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs. Connecting veterans with the people and resources they need to be successful in their entrepreneurial endeavors, this event will address a variety of key business topics and challenges. Small businesses in all stages—startups to established companies—are welcome to join us for this informative webinar and live Q&A with the experts! **[Register here.](#)**

SEPT 23: INTRODUCTION TO GOVERNMENT CONTRACTING

This is a Free 1-hour Webinar/Workshop (11:00 am to 12 noon) on how to do business in the government marketplace. (Federal, State, and Local governments) **[Register here.](#)**

SEPT 29: FAST FORWARD SUMMIT 2020

On September 29 and 30, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation will host a two-day, future-looking summit to highlight the people, ideas, and innovations that are shaping our lives and businesses. [Register here.](#)

SEPT 30: CYBERSECURITY BASICS FOR FEDERAL CONTRACTORS

Join Northwest Texas PTAC, Senior Field Advisor Mark Snyder as he provides you with a general understanding of the basic cybersecurity requirements that the Department of Defense has for all contractors and sub-contractors. You'll learn about the benefits of being prepared and the process for putting a cybersecurity plan in place. [Register here.](#)

OCT 1: BIG COUNTRY MANUFACTURING ALLIANCE AN ESSENTIAL PATHWAY TO A STRONGER ECONOMY

Students, educators and employers are invited to attend the Big Country Manufacturing Allians "An Essential Pathway to a Stronger economy" virtual event showcasing manufacturing career opportunities and the importance of the manufacturing sector to the Big Country, the state of Texas and the nation. [Register here.](#)

OCT 7: VOSB & SDVOSB—Application Mechanics

This is the second part of The Northwest Texas PTAC's Veteran Owned Small Business Certification webinar.

This first part covered the VOSB/SDVOSB certification program, the advantages, and qualifications. This second part will cover the hands on mechanics of applying for the certification. We'll go through the process screen by screen to show you how to navigate the certification system to the point of final submission of application. [Register here.](#)

OCT 8: GOVERNMENT, NON-PROFIT & SOCIAL SERVICES VIRTUAL CAREER FAIR

This Government, NonProfit & Social Services VIRTUAL Career Fair is brought to you by the West Central Texas Career Consortium. Participating in this event is an excellent way for your organization to gain visibility and maximize recruiting potential! Employers interested in participating in this event are encouraged to register online as early as possible. [Register here.](#)

OCT 14: DBE—DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM THROUGH TXDOT

Want to learn how to qualify your small business as a DBE with the Texas Department of Transportation?? Join the Northwest Texas PTAC as we present this informative webinar that begins with an overview of the program, talks about the advantages of being certified, discusses the qualifications for certification, and talks about the documentation needed to complete the application. [Register here.](#)

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