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FSA Offers Safety Net Programs for Honeybee Producers

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) administers two programs that have specific safety net benefits for producers of honeybees and honey. The Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) assist producers when disasters impact honey production or damage or destroy colonies, hives or honeybee feed.



Reporting Organic Crops



If you want to use the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) organic price and you select the "organic" option on your NAP application, you must report your crops as organic.

When certifying organic acres, the buffer zone acreage must be included in the organic acreage.

You must also provide a current organic plan, organic certificate or documentation from a certifying agent indicating an organic plan is in effect. Documentation must include:

- name of certified individuals
- address
- telephone number
- effective date of certification
- certificate number
- list of commodities certified
- name and address of certifying agent
- a map showing the specific location of each field of certified organic, including the buffer zone acreage

Certification exemptions are available for producers whose annual gross agricultural income from organic sales totals \$5,000 or less. Although exempt growers are not required to provide a written certificate, they are still required to provide a map showing the specific location of each field of certified organic, transitional and buffer zone acreage.

For questions about reporting organic crops, contact your County USDA Service Center.

USDA Advances Food System Transformation with \$43 Million for Urban Agriculture and Innovation, Adds New Urban County Committees

USDA announced significant investments to support urban agriculture, including \$43.1 million for grants and cooperative agreements as well as six new urban county committees to help deliver key USDA programs to urban producers. These actions support USDA's efforts to strengthen the food supply chain and transform the food system to be fairer, more competitive, and more resilient.



Specifically, USDA is investing \$10.2 million in new cooperative agreements to expand compost and food waste reduction efforts and \$14.2 million in new grants to support the development of urban agriculture and innovative production projects. Additionally, \$18.7 million will fund 75 worthy grant proposals from the 2021 application cycle, which was oversubscribed.

These investments build on USDA's [Food Systems Transformation Framework](#) unveiled earlier. The goals of USDA's Food System Transformation Framework include:

- Building a more resilient food supply chain that provides more and better market options for consumers and producers while reducing carbon pollution.
- Creating a fairer food system that combats market dominance and helps producers and consumers gain more power in the marketplace by creating new, more and better local market options.
- Making nutritious food more accessible and affordable for consumers.
- Emphasizing equity by creating wealth that stays in small towns and underserved communities.

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is also standing up six more urban county committees, which help deliver farm loans, disaster assistance, safety net and conservation programs.

Conservation Practice Adoption and Motivations Survey Underway



The Conservation Practice Adoption Motivations Survey is now underway. This survey is a joint project between USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) aimed at assessing the adoption rates of different conservation practices. Survey data will be used to guide the implementation of NRCS programs in the future. **The data collection period runs from May 30 to August 19.**

There are four different conservation categories which are surveyed: crop practices, grazing practices, confined livestock practices, and forestry practices. Each category will have a questionnaire that has been designed to gather information specific to the practices involved in each category.

NASS is sending questionnaires for crop practices and confined livestock practices in 2022. Questionnaires for grazing practices and forestry practices will be sent in 2024.

If you received a survey, please respond securely online at agcounts.usda.gov, using the 12-digit survey code mailed with the survey. Producers responding online will now use NASS's new Respondent Portal. On the portal, producers can complete their surveys, access data visualizations and reports of interest, link to other USDA agencies, get a local weather update and more. Completed questionnaires may also be mailed back in the prepaid envelope provided.

Results from both versions of the survey will be available Sept. 15, 2022, at nass.usda.gov and in NASS's Quick Stats database at quickstats.nass.usda.gov.

[Learn more.](#)

Florida Conservation Innovation Grants Proposals Due August 31

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) [Natural Resources Conservation Service \(NRCS\) in Florida](#) reminds interested agricultural landowners that the deadline to submit a [Conservation Innovation Grants \(CIG\)](#) proposal is **August 31, 2022**, by 11:59 p.m., Eastern Standard Time. USDA will invest up to \$900K for Conservation Innovation Grants that address Florida's agricultural resource priorities. Fiscal Year 2022 conservation resource priorities for the NRCS in Florida are: climate resilience, grazing, soil health, and urban agriculture.



Grants between \$25,000 to \$250,000 will be awarded to applicants matching those funds on a dollar-for-dollar basis from non-federal sources that can include cash or in-kind contributions. U.S. based, non-federal entities and individuals are eligible to apply for projects carried out in Florida. Up to 10 percent of the funds are for proposals from historically underserved producers, veteran farmers or ranchers, or community-based organizations representing these entities. The funding announcement seeking proposals will be published on [grants.gov](#).

Conservation Innovation Grants are competitive grants that drive public and private sector innovation in resource conservation. The CIG projects inspire creative problem solving that boosts production on farms, ranches, and private forests that improve water quality, soil health, and wildlife habitat. Under the state CIG, public and private grantees develop the tools, technologies, and strategies to support next-generation conservation efforts on working lands and develop market-based solutions to resource challenges.

For more information and to view recent Florida CIG webinars visit: [Florida NRCS Financial Assistance](#). (Full link: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detailfull/fl/programs/financial/cig/?cid=STELPRDB1101273>)

Communication is Key in Lending

Farm Service Agency (FSA) is committed to providing our farm loan borrowers the tools necessary to be successful. FSA staff will provide guidance and counsel from the loan application process through the borrower's graduation to commercial credit. While it is FSA's commitment to advise borrowers as they identify goals and evaluate progress, it is crucial for borrowers to communicate with their farm loan staff when changes occur. It is the borrower's responsibility to alert FSA to any of the following:



- Any proposed or significant changes in the farming operation
- Any significant changes to family income or expenses
- The development of problem situations

- Any losses or proposed significant changes in security

If a farm loan borrower can't make payments to suppliers, other creditors, or FSA on time, contact your farm loan staff immediately to discuss loan servicing options.

For more information on FSA farm loan programs, contact your County USDA Service Center or visit fsa.usda.gov.

Progression Lending from FSA



Farm Service Agency (FSA) farm loans are considered progression lending. Unlike loans from a commercial lender, FSA loans are intended to be temporary in nature. Our goal is to help you graduate to commercial credit, and our farm loan staff is available to help borrowers through training and credit counseling.

The FSA team will help borrowers identify their goals to ensure financial success. FSA staff will advise borrowers on developing strategies and a plan to meet your goals and graduate to commercial credit. FSA borrowers are responsible for the success of their farming operation, but FSA staff will help in an advisory role, providing the tools necessary to help you achieve your operational goals and manage your finances.

For more information on FSA farm loan programs, contact your County USDA Service Center or visit fsa.usda.gov.

Beginning Farmer Loan Opportunity

Accessing capital to begin, extend or support an agriculture operation can be especially challenging to new producers. Farm Service Agency's "Beginning Farmer" direct and guaranteed loan programs provide an opportunity for qualified applicants to secure loans from funding set aside for producers who meet the following conditions:

- Has operated a farm for not more than 10 years
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm
- Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA
- Does not own a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county's average size farm.



For more information contact, contact your County USDA Service Center or visit fsa.usda.gov.

Dates to Remember

July 15 - Acreage Reporting Sugar Cane

Oct 31 - Organic and Transitional Education and Certification Program (OTECP)

Oct 31 - Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP)

Dec 31 - A Second Disaster Set-Aside for Farm Loans

Selected Interest Rates for July 2022

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|--|--------|
| Farm Operating - Direct | 3.875% |
| Farm Operating - Microloan | 3.875% |
| Farm Ownership - Direct | 4.125% |
| Farm Ownership - Microloan | 4.125% |
| Farm Ownership - Direct, Joint Financing | 2.500% |
| Farm Ownership - Down Payment | 1.500% |
| Emergency Loan - Amount of Actual Loss | 3.750% |



Florida USDA

4500 NW 27th Ave
Gainesville, FL 32606

Phone: 352-338-3400

FSA State Executive Director
Deborah Tannenbaum
deborah.tannenbaum@usda.gov

NRCS State Conservationist
Juan Hernandez
juan.hernandez@usda.gov

RMA Regional Office Director
Davina Lee
davina.lee@usda.gov

