

In This Issue:

- [From the Desk of Matt Russell, State Executive Director](#)
- [Inflation Reduction Act Assistance for Distressed Borrowers](#)
- [USDA Extends Application Deadline for Discrimination Financial Assistance Program to Jan. 13](#)
- [USDA to Provide More Than \\$3 Billion to Commodity and Specialty Crop Producers Impacted by 2022 Natural Disasters](#)
- [Producers are Reminded to Complete NASS Crop Surveys](#)
- [Farmers.gov - Your Online Hub for Conducting Business with USDA](#)
- [Have You Voted? County Committee Election Ballot Deadline Approaching](#)

From the Desk of Matt Russell, State Executive Director

November is a time to be thankful. Not that there isn't usually something to be thankful for, but it's nice to have a time every year where we all join together to share our gratitude as we celebrate Thanksgiving. I'm thankful for getting to work with over 600 amazing co-workers at Iowa FSA. Being part of the Biden-Harris Administration is an opportunity of a lifetime. Under the leadership of Secretary Vilsack, USDA is making historic investments to empower American farmers to help solve some of the world's biggest challenges. We're being asked to do more than just grow crops and manage livestock. Iowa farmers are being invited to conserve resources, improve soil health, clean up water, and fight climate change.

All of this is not without cost and risk. Your dedicated county office FSA staff are ready to serve you and provide the support you need to help you navigate the opportunities and challenges facing Iowa farmers. I'm thankful this administration, with help from congress, has been able to continue to deliver all of the 2018 farm bill programs and more than a half dozen ad hoc programs to support Iowa farming families. As a reminder, we are under a Continuing Resolution through January 19, which means our staff are at work and ready to serve. Congress also extended the 2018 farm bill through the end of the year. This means that the provisions of the 2018 farm bill continue until September 30, 2024, or until a new farm bill becomes law. I'm thankful as farmers we can stop in our county offices or call the staff to learn more about the programs we might be able to use to sustain and grow our operations.

I'm thankful I get to vote for my FSA county committee member to represent me in program implementation, program integrity, and in helping the county staff be successful. Producers and landowners must return ballots to the local FSA county office or have postmarked by Dec. 4, 2023 in order for their votes to count.

When the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) sends out surveys to American farmers, I often get one. I'm honored to fill it out. I'm thankful I've been a member of the Iowa farming community my entire life. My heart is filled with gratitude to be working every day with the Iowa FSA team to help keep farming families on the land and to support those who want to become Iowa farmers.

Matt



Inflation Reduction Act Assistance for Distressed Borrowers

Since October 2022, USDA has provided approximately \$1.5 billion in immediate assistance to more than 24,000 financially distressed direct and guaranteed FSA loan borrowers through the Inflation Reduction Act.

FSA is currently accepting individual requests for assistance from borrowers who took certain extraordinary measures to avoid delinquency on their direct FSA loans, missed a recent installment, or are unable to make their next scheduled installment.

For more information on eligibility, or to submit a request for assistance, producers can contact their local USDA Service Center or visit farmers.gov/inflation-reduction-investments/assistance.

USDA Extends Application Deadline for Discrimination Financial Assistance Program to Jan. 13

The application period is now open for a new financial assistance program under Section 22007 of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), for farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners who experienced discrimination in USDA farm lending programs prior to January 2021. The application process will close on January 13, 2024. Borrowers will have the option to apply for assistance online via 22007apply.gov or through a paper-based form.

Details about the program, including an application and e-filing portal, are available at 22007apply.gov. The website includes an English and Spanish language application that applicants can download or submit via an e-filing portal, information on how to obtain technical assistance in-person or virtually, and additional resources and details about the program. Applicants can also call the free call center at 1-800-721-0970, or visit one of several dozen brick-and-mortar offices the program has set up around the country. Locations are provided on the program website and vendors will update the local events schedule with more information as it becomes available. It is important to note that filing an application is FREE and does not require a lawyer.

If you want to get weekly updates on the program's events and progress, you can go to <https://22007apply.gov>, and subscribe to a weekly newsletter.



USDA to Provide More Than \$3 Billion to Commodity and Specialty Crop Producers Impacted by 2022 Natural Disasters

The U. S Department of Agriculture (USDA) will provide more than \$3 billion to commodity and specialty crop producers impacted by natural disaster events in 2022. Eligible impacted producers can apply for financial assistance through the [Emergency Relief Program \(ERP\) 2022](#). The program will help offset the financial impacts of crop yield and value losses from qualifying disasters occurring in 2022.

Background

On Dec. 29, 2022, President Biden signed into law the *Disaster Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2023 (P.L. 117-328)* that provides about \$3.7 billion in financial assistance for agricultural producers impacted by eligible natural disasters that occurred in calendar year 2022.

ERP 2022 covers losses to crops, trees, bushes and vines due to qualifying, calendar year 2022 natural disaster events including wildfires, hurricanes, floods, derechos, excessive heat, tornadoes, winter storms, freeze (including a polar vortex), smoke exposure, excessive moisture, qualifying drought and related conditions.

ERP 2022 program benefits will be delivered to eligible producers through a two-track process. FSA intends to make both tracks available to producers at the same time. This two-track approach enables USDA to:

- Streamline the application process.
- Reduce the paperwork burden on producers.
- Proactively include provisions for underserved producers who have not been well served by past emergency relief efforts.
- Encourage producer participation in existing risk management programs to mitigate the impacts of future severe weather events.

It's important to note that disaster-impacted producers may be eligible for ERP 2022 assistance under one or both tracks. To avoid duplicative benefits, if a producer applies for both tracks, the Track 2 payment calculation will take into account any payments received through Track 1.

ERP 2022 Application Process – Track 1

ERP 2022 Track 1 leverages existing federal crop insurance or Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) data as the basis for calculating payments for eligible crop producers who received indemnities through these risk management programs. Although FSA is sending pre-filled ERP 2022 Track 1 application forms to producers who have crop insurance and NAP data already on file with USDA, producers indemnified for losses resulting from 2022 natural disasters do not have to wait to receive the application before requesting ERP 2022 assistance. Effective Oct. 31, 2023, producers can apply for ERP 2022 benefits whether they have received the pre-filled application or not. Receipt of a pre-filled application is not confirmation that a producer is eligible to receive an ERP 2022 Track 1 payment.

USDA estimates that ERP Track 1 benefits will reach more than 206,000 producers who received indemnities for losses covered by federal crop insurance and more than 4,500 producers who obtained NAP coverage for the 2022 crop year.

ERP 2022 Application Process – Track 2

Track 2 is a revenue-based certification program designed to assist eligible producers who suffered an eligible decrease in revenue resulting from 2022 calendar year disaster events when compared with revenue in a benchmark year using revenue information that is readily available from most tax records. In cases where revenue does not reasonably reflect a normal year's revenue, Track 2 provides an alternative method for establishing revenue. Likewise, Track 2 affords producers of crops that are used within an operation and do not generate revenue from the sale of the crop a method for establishing revenue for the purpose of applying for ERP 2022 benefits. Producers are not required to submit tax records to FSA unless requested by the County Committee if required for an FSA compliance spot check.

Although not required when applying for ERP 2022 Track 2, applicants might find the following documents useful to the process:

- Schedule F (Form 1040)
- *Profit or Loss from Farming* or similar tax documents for tax years 2018, 2019, 2022 and 2023.

Track 2 targets gaps in emergency relief assistance for eligible producers whose eligible losses were not covered by crop insurance or NAP including revenue losses too small (shallow loss) to be covered by crop insurance.

Producers interested in applying for ERP 2022 Track 2, should contact their local FSA county office. Additional reference resources can be found on FSA's [emergency relief website](#).

Additional Required Forms

For both ERP 2022 tracks, all producers must have certain required forms on file with FSA within 60 days of the ERP 2022 deadline. Producers can apply for ERP 2022 starting Oct. 31, 2023. The application deadline has not yet been determined and will be announced at a later date. If not already on file, producers can update, complete and submit required forms to FSA at any time.

Required forms:

- Form AD-2047, *Customer Data Worksheet*.
- Form CCC-902, *Farm Operating Plan* for an individual or legal entity.
- Form CCC-901, *Member Information for Legal Entities* (if applicable).
- Form FSA-510, *Request for an Exception to the \$125,000 Payment Limitation for Certain Programs* (if applicable).
- Form CCC-860, *Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, Beginning and Veteran Farmer or Rancher Certification*, if applicable, for the 2022 program year.
- A highly erodible land conservation (sometimes referred to as HELC) and wetland conservation certification (Form AD-1026 *Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELIC) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification*) for the ERP producer and applicable affiliates.

Most producers, especially those who have previously participated in FSA programs, will likely have these required forms on file. However, those who are uncertain or want to confirm the status of their forms can contact their local FSA county office.

Future Insurance Coverage Requirements

All producers who receive ERP 2022 payments must purchase crop insurance, or NAP coverage where crop insurance is not available, in the next two available crop years as determined by the Secretary. Purchased coverage must be at the 60/100 coverage level or higher for insured crops or at the catastrophic coverage level or higher for NAP crops.

More Information

ERP 2022 eligibility details and payment calculation factor tables are available on the [emergency relief website](#), in the [ERP Track 1](#) and [ERP Track 2](#) fact sheets and through your local [FSA county office](#).

Producers are Reminded to Complete NASS Crop Surveys

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) Iowa Field Office is currently surveying a sample of about 8,000 producers to determine State and county level harvested acreage, yield, and production of major crops. If you are one of the producers contacted to complete a 2023 crop production survey, we encourage your participation as many USDA agencies including the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Risk Management Agency (RMA) use the NASS data to help implement their conservation, disaster, loan, and crop insurance programs.

By responding to NASS surveys, you help ensure that all areas of the State are represented so the published numbers are as accurate as possible. You will also play an active role in making sure farm programs are equitably implemented in your county.

Selected producers are encouraged to respond online at agcounts.usda.gov or by mail. NASS interviewers may also follow-up by telephone or in-person to ensure timely reporting. Any information you provide is kept confidential and protected by federal law. NASS publishes only aggregate-level data, ensuring that no individual operation or producer can be identified.

State-level data for Iowa will be published on January 12, 2024, while county-level data for the corn and soybean crops will be released on February 23, 2024. All reports will be available on the internet at www.nass.usda.gov. If you have any questions about how to complete a survey from the NASS Iowa Field Office, please call 1-800-772-0825.

Farmers.gov - Your Online Hub for Conducting Business with USDA



[Farmers.gov](https://farmers.gov) gives you one place to do business with USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), including accessing your farm records, maps, and common land units. You can create a farmers.gov account for the farmers.gov authenticated site, where you can access self-service features through a secure login.

In addition to the self-service features farmers.gov website also has information on USDA programs, farm loans, disaster assistance, conservation programs and crop insurance.

What can you do with your farmers.gov account?

- View FSA Farm loans including loan information, interest payments, loan advance and payment history, paid-in-full restructured loans, and account alerts.
- View NRCS Disbursements and Farm Loans financial activity from the past 180 days.
- View, print and export detailed farm records and farm/tract maps.
- Export common land unit (field) boundaries as ESRI and GeoJSON file types.
- Import precision agriculture planting boundaries, create labels containing crop information, and print both on farm tract maps.
- Use the draw tools to determine acres in an area of interest that can be printed on a map and provided to a third party or exported as a feature file for use in other geospatial applications.
- View, upload, download and e-sign NRCS documents.
- Request conservation and financial assistance, including submitting a program application.
- Access information on current and past conservation practices, report practice completion and request practice certification
- View detailed information on previous and ongoing contracts, including the amount of cost- share assistance received and request contract modifications.

How to create a farmers.gov account?

To create a farmers.gov account you will need:

- A USDA individual customer record - A customer record contains information you have given to USDA to do business with them, like your name, address, phone number, and any legal representative authority relationships.

- A login.gov account – Login.gov is a sign-in service that gives people secure online access to participating government programs.



Have You Voted? County Committee Election Ballot Deadline Approaching

In early November, USDA mailed ballots for FSA county committee elections to all eligible agricultural producers and private landowners across the country. Elections are occurring in certain Local Administrative Areas (LAAs) across Iowa. If you received a ballot, please take a moment to vote and return the ballot.

To be counted, producers and landowners must return ballots to the local FSA county office or have postmarked by Dec. 4, 2023. County committees are unique to FSA and serve as a direct link between agricultural communities across the country and USDA. For more information on FSA county committees, visit fsa.usda.gov/elections.





Join Our Team

*We are
hiring*

**BE A PART
OF OUR
STORY**

Farm Service Agency

fsa.usda.gov
usajobs.gov

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is announcing a new crop insurance program designed for agricultural producers who use controlled environments in their operations. The new Controlled Environment program from USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) is specifically for plants grown in fully enclosed controlled environments and provides coverage against plant diseases subject to destruction orders. Available beginning in the 2024 crop year, the Controlled Environment program provides a risk management resource for urban, specialty crop, and organic producers who often use controlled environments as a major part of their operations. The first sales closing date is Dec. 1, 2023. [Learn more.](#)

Iowa Farm Service Agency

10500 Buena Vista Court
Des Moines, IA 50322

Phone: 515-254-1540

Matt Russell, Executive Director

Iowa State Committee

Wendy Johnson, Chair
Kayla Koether
Ryan Marquardt
Mark Recker
Seth Watkins