



Farm Service Agency

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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Farm Service Agency Seeking Nominations for Farmers and Ranchers to Serve on Local County Committees



Nominations are now being accepted for farmers and ranchers to serve on local U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees. These committees make important decisions about how federal farm programs are administered

locally. All nomination forms for the 2024 election must be postmarked or received in the local FSA office by Aug. 1, 2024.

Elections for committee members will occur in certain Local Administrative Areas (LAA). LAAs are elective areas for FSA committees in a single county or multi-county jurisdiction and may include LAAs that are focused on an urban or suburban area.

Customers can locate their LAA through a geographic information system locator tool available at fsa.usda.gov/elections and determine if their LAA is up for election by contacting their local FSA office.

Agricultural producers may be nominated for candidacy for the county committee if they:

- Participate or cooperate in a USDA program.
- Reside in the LAA that is up for election this year.

A cooperating producer is someone who has provided information about their farming or ranching operation to FSA, even if they have not applied or received program benefits.

Individuals may nominate themselves or others and qualifying organizations may also nominate candidates. USDA encourages minority, women, urban and beginning farmers or ranchers to nominate, vote and hold office.

Nationwide, more than 7,700 dedicated members of the agricultural community serve on FSA county committees. The committees are made up of three to 11 members who serve three-year terms. Committee members are vital to how FSA carries out disaster recovery, conservation, commodity and price support programs, as well as making decisions on county office employment and other agricultural issues.

Urban and Suburban County Committees

The 2018 Farm Bill directed USDA to form urban county committees and make other advancements related to urban agriculture, including the establishment of the Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production. FSA established county committees specifically focused on urban agriculture that work to encourage and promote urban, indoor and other emerging agricultural production practices. Additionally, the county committees may address food access, community engagement, support of local activities to promote and encourage community compost and food waste reduction.

Urban committee members are nominated and elected to serve by local urban producers in the same jurisdiction. Urban county committee members provide outreach to ensure urban producers understand USDA programs, serve as the voice of other urban producers and assist in program implementation that support the needs of the growing urban community.

The 27 cities with urban county committees are listed at fsa.usda.gov/elections and farmers.gov/urban. Of these, ten urban county committees will hold an inaugural election this cycle.

More Information

Producers should contact their local FSA office today to register and find out how to get involved in their county's election, including if their LAA is up for election this year. To be considered, a producer must be registered and sign an [FSA-669A](#) nomination form. This form and other information about FSA county committee elections are available at fsa.usda.gov/elections.

All nomination forms for the 2024 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by the Aug. 1, 2024, deadline. Election ballots will be mailed to eligible voters in November 2024.

USDA Announces August 14 Application Deadline for Emergency Relief Program Assistance for Commodity and Specialty Crop Producers Impacted by 2022 Natural Disasters

If natural disasters impacted your farm or ranch in 2022, there's still time to submit your application for ERP assistance before the Aug. 14 deadline.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced that the deadline for commodity and specialty crop producers to apply for the Emergency Relief Program (ERP) for 2022 natural disaster losses is Aug. 14, 2024. USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) began accepting ERP 2022 applications in October 2023.

Through the *Disaster Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2023* (P.L. 117-328) Congress allocated \$3.2 billion in funding to cover an estimated \$10 billion in uncovered crop losses.

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 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.

In fall 2023, FSA began issuing pre-filled ERP 2022 Track 1 application forms to producers who had crop insurance and NAP data already on file with USDA. Receipt of a pre-filled

application is not confirmation that a producer is eligible to receive an ERP 2022 Track 1 payment.

ERP 2022 Application Process – Track 2

Track 2 is a revenue-based certification program designed to assist 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.

It's important to note that disaster-impacted producers may be eligible for ERP 2022 assistance under one or both tracks (ERP 2022 Track 1 and Track 2). 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.

Additional Required Forms

For both ERP 2022 tracks, all producers must have certain required forms on file with FSA within 60 days of the Aug. 14 application deadline. If not already on file, producers can update, complete and submit required forms to FSA by Tuesday, Oct. 15, 2024.

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.
 - *Note: Currently, there is a Federal court injunction that prohibits USDA from “making or increasing payments, or providing any additional relief, based on its ‘socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher’ designation” under ERP 2022. This may impact certain payments.*
- A highly erodible land conservation (sometimes referred to as HELC) and wetland conservation certification (Form AD-1026 Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELC) 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 FSA’s [Emergency Relief webpage](#), in the [ERP Track 1](#) and [ERP Track 2](#) fact sheets and through the FSA at your local [USDA Service Center](#).

Dr. Julie Gauthier, Executive Director of Veterinary Services’ Field Operations and Policy Liaison, USDA-APHIS, Answers Questions About H5N1 in Dairy Herds



Dr. Julie Gauthier, Executive Director of Veterinary Services’ Field Operations and Policy Liaison, USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), offers her expertise regarding H5N1 in the United States, its current effects in our dairy industry, and the process and importance of testing your cows to help protect them, your operation, and the dairy industry as a whole. [Read our farmers.gov Ask the Expert blog for the full interview with Dr. Gauthier and learn](#)

[more about available assistance through USDA Farm Service Agency's Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-raised Fish Program \(ELAP\).](#)

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