



Farm Service Agency

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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Dates to Remember

September 30, 2024: Acreage reporting deadline for value-loss and controlled environment crops (except nursery) for the ensuing crop year.

September 30, 2024: [Noninsured Disaster Assistance Program](#) Closing Deadline for Value Loss Crops (Christmas Trees, Flowers, Ginseng, etc.), forage crops and fall seeded small grains, Garlic, and Wild Rice.

October 1-4, 2024: [World Dairy Expo](#)

October 14, 2024: USDA Service Centers closed in observance of Columbus Day.

November 15, 2024: Fall Acreage Reporting Deadline for fall mint and fall-seeded small grains

Reminder: Insurance Linkage Requirements for Payments Received Through the Emergency Relief Program

Producers who received a payment under the Emergency Relief Program (ERP) for crop losses occurring in 2020, 2021, or 2022 calendar years due to qualifying events occurring in calendar years 2020, 2021 or 2022 need to meet ERP insurance linkage requirements by purchasing crop insurance, or Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage where crop insurance is not available.

Coverage for insured crops is based on physical location county and must be purchased at the 60/100 coverage level or higher. Coverage for NAP crops is based on the administrative county and must be purchased at the catastrophic level or higher. Linkage is required for the next two available crop years, which will be determined from the date you received an ERP payment and may vary depending on the timing and availability of coverage. Questions about your specific linkage requirements can be directed to your local [USDA Service Center](#) or visit fsa.usda.gov.

Note: Producers who received ERP Phase 2 payments or ERP 2022 Track 2 payments are required to meet linkage in all physical locations where the crop is grown in linkage years.

The next major sales closing date for forage crops and fall seeded small grains, value loss crops and garlic is **September 30, 2024**. Contact your crop insurance agent or local FSA county office as soon as possible regarding coverage options. Producers who do not obtain the applicable coverage by the sales/application closing date will be required to refund the ERP benefits received on the applicable crop, plus interest. To determine which crops are eligible for federal crop insurance or NAP, visit the RMA website.

Current Farm Loan Interest Rates

Current loan rates as of September 1, 2024.

Please visit the [Farm Loan Program](#) webpage for more information.

Farm Loan Interest Rates:

Farm Operating - Direct	5.250%
Farm Operating - Microloan	5.250%
Farm Ownership - Direct	5.500%

Farm Ownership - Microloan	5.500%
Farm Ownership - Direct, Joint Financing	3.500%
Farm Ownership - Down Payment	1.500%
Emergency - Amount of Actual Loss	3.750%

Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL):

3-year FSFL	4.000%
5-year FSFL	3.875%
7-year FSFL	3.875%
10-year FSFL	4.000%
12-year FSFL	4.125%

USDA Launches Online Debt Consolidation Tool to Increase Farmer And Rancher Financial Viability

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is announcing the launch of the Debt Consolidation Tool, an innovative online tool available through farmers.gov that allows agricultural producers to enter their farm operating debt and evaluate the potential savings that might be provided by obtaining a debt consolidation loan with USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) or a local lender.

A debt consolidation loan is a new loan used to pay off other existing operating loans or lines of credit that might have unreasonable rates and terms. By combining multiple eligible debts into a single, larger loan, borrowers may obtain more favorable payment terms such as a lower interest rate or lower payments. Consolidating debt may also provide farmers and ranchers additional cash flow flexibilities.

The Debt Consolidation Tool is a significant addition to FSA's suite of improvements designed to modernize its Farm Loan Programs. The tool enhances customer service and increases opportunities for farmers and ranchers to achieve financial viability by helping them identify potential savings that could be reinvested in their farming and ranching operation, retirement accounts, or college savings accounts.

Producers can access the Debt Consolidation Tool by visiting farmers.gov/debt-consolidation-tool. The tool is built to run on modern browsers including Chrome, Edge, Firefox, or the Safari browser. Producers do not need to create a farmers.gov account or access the authenticated customer portal to use the tool.

Additional Farm Loan Programs Improvements

FSA recently announced significant changes to Farm Loan Programs through the [Enhancing Program Access and Delivery for Farm Loans rule](#). These policy changes, to take effect September 25, 2024, are designed to better assist borrowers to make strategic investments in the enhancement or expansion of their agricultural operations.

FSA also has a significant initiative underway to streamline and automate the Farm Loan Program customer-facing business process. For the over 26,000 producers who submit a direct loan application annually, FSA has made several impactful improvements including:

- The [Loan Assistance Tool](#) that provides customers with an interactive online, step-by-step guide to identifying the direct loan products that may be a fit for their business needs and to understanding the application process.
- The [Online Loan Application](#), an interactive, guided application that is paperless and provides helpful features including an electronic signature option, the ability to attach supporting documents such as tax returns, complete a balance sheet, and build a farm operating plan.
- An [online direct loan repayment feature](#) that relieves borrowers from the necessity of calling, mailing, or visiting a local USDA Service Center to pay a loan installment.
- A [simplified direct loan paper application](#), reduced from 29 pages to 13 pages.
- A new [educational hub](#) with farm loan resources and videos.

USDA encourages producers to reach out to their local FSA farm loan staff to ensure they fully understand the wide range of loan and servicing options available to assist with starting, expanding, or maintaining their agricultural operation. To conduct business with FSA, please contact your local [USDA Service Center](#).

FSA helps America's farmers, ranchers and forest landowners invest in, improve, protect and expand their agricultural operations through the delivery of agricultural programs for all Americans. FSA implements agricultural policy, administers credit and loan programs, and manages conservation, commodity, disaster recovery and marketing programs through a national network of state and county offices and locally elected county committees. For more information, visit fsa.usda.gov.

Wisconsin NRCS Announces Inflation Reduction Act Funding for its Agricultural Conservation Easement Program for Fiscal Year 2025

NRCS accepts applications year-round, but apply by Oct. 4 and Dec. 20, 2024

USDA announced today funding provided by the Inflation Reduction Act for the [Agricultural Conservation Easement Program](#) (ACEP) for fiscal year 2025. NRCS accepts applications year-round for ACEP Agricultural Land Easements (ACEP-ALE) and Wetland Reserve Easements (ACEP-WRE). Interested landowners and partners should apply by the next two batching dates, **Oct. 4, 2024**, or **Dec. 20, 2024**, at their local NRCS office, to be considered for these two state-led funding cycles. In addition, any application submitted to NRCS that was unfunded in fiscal year 2024 will be automatically re-considered during the October 4 funding cycle, unless cancelled by the applicant.

In fiscal year 2025, states will receive Inflation Reduction Act funding and all eligible applications within a state will compete. The current ACEP priorities for the Inflation Reduction Act funding are unchanged from last fiscal year and are available in all states. The Inflation Reduction Act funding is in addition to the funding authorized and available under the Farm Bill and through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

[Click here to learn more.](#)

USDA Accepts Nearly 2.2 Million Acres through this year's Grassland, General, and Continuous CRP signups

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is accepting offers for more than 2.2 million acres from agricultural producers and private landowners through this year's Grassland, General, and Continuous [Conservation Reserve Program](#) (CRP) signups administered by USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA). With these accepted acres, enrollment is very near the 27 million CRP acreage cap.

Grassland CRP

Including the nearly 1.44 million acres recently accepted in Grassland CRP for offers received in 2024, producers will have enrolled more than 10 million acres in this popular working-lands program.

Grassland CRP allows producers and landowners to continue grazing and haying practices while protecting grasslands and further CRP's impacts. Grassland CRP leverages working lands practices to improve biodiversity and conserve environmentally sensitive land.

Enrolled acres help sequester carbon in vegetation and soil, while enhancing resilience to drought and wildfire. Meanwhile, producers can still conduct common grazing practices, such as haying, mowing or harvesting seed from the enrolled land, which supports agricultural production.

Top states for this year's Grassland CRP signup include:

- **Nebraska** with 237,853 acres accepted
- **Colorado** with 218,145 acres accepted
- **New Mexico** with 185,619 acres accepted

Additionally, to target conservation in key geographies, USDA prioritizes land within two National Priority Zones: The Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem and the Dust Bowl area. The 2024 Grassland CRP enrollment has added more than 560,000 acres in the Priority Zones, bringing the total acres to 3.8 million. By conserving working grasslands and other lands that underpin iconic big game migrations, land enrolled in these zones contributes to broader USDA conservation efforts through [Working Lands for Wildlife](#).

General and Continuous CRP

FSA also has accepted nearly 200,000 acres through the General signup, bringing total acres enrolled in General CRP to 7.9 million acres. As one of the largest private lands conservation programs in the United States, CRP offers a range of conservation options to farmers, ranchers and landowners. It has been an especially strong opportunity for farmers with less productive or marginal cropland, helping them re-establish valuable land cover to help improve water quality, prevent soil erosion and support wildlife habitat.

In January 2024, FSA opened enrollment for Continuous CRP. Under this enrollment, producers and landowners can enroll in CRP throughout the year. Offers are automatically accepted provided the producer and land meet the eligibility requirements and the enrollment levels do not exceed the statutory cap. To date, in 2024, more than 565,000 acres have been offered through Continuous CRP bringing the total acres enrolled to 8.5 million.

Producers can still make an offer to participate in CRP through [the Continuous CRP signup](#), which is ongoing, by contacting FSA at their local USDA Service Center.

USDA Updates Farm Loan Programs to Increase Financial Freedom, Resilience and Profitability for Agricultural Producers

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced changes to the Farm Service Agency's (FSA) Farm Loan Programs, effective Sept. 25, 2024 — changes that are intended to increase opportunities for farmers and ranchers to be financially viable. These improvements, part of the [Enhancing Program Access and Delivery for Farm Loans rule](#), demonstrate USDA's commitment to improving farm profitability through farm loans designed to provide important financing options used by producers to cover operating expenses and purchase land and equipment.

Farm loan policy changes outlined in the *Enhancing Program Access and Delivery for Farm Loans* rule, are designed to better assist borrowers to make strategic investments in the enhancement or expansion of their agricultural operations.

The three most notable policy changes include:

- Establishing a new low-interest installment set-aside program for financially distressed borrowers. Eligible financially distressed borrowers can defer up to one annual loan installment per qualified loan at a reduced interest rate, providing a simpler and expedited option to resolve financial distress in addition to FSA's existing loan servicing programs.
- Providing all eligible loan applicants access to flexible repayment terms that can increase profitability and help build working capital reserves and savings. By creating upfront positive cash flow, borrowers can find opportunities in their farm operating plan budgets to include a reasonable margin for increased working capital reserves and savings, including for retirement and education.
- Reducing additional loan security requirements to enable borrowers to leverage equity. This reduces the amount of additional security required for direct farm loans, including reducing the frequency borrowers must use their personal residence as additional collateral for a farm loan.

Additional Farm Loan Program Improvements

Under the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA's FSA has embarked on a comprehensive and systemic effort to ensure equitable delivery of Farm Loan Programs and improve access to credit for small and mid-size family farms. FSA has also included additional data in its [annual report to Congress](#) to provide information that Congress, stakeholders, and the general public need to hold USDA accountable on the progress that has been made in improving services to underserved producers. This year's report shows FSA direct and guaranteed loans were made to a greater percentage of young and beginning farmers and ranchers, as well as improvements in the participation rates of minority borrowers. The report

also highlights FSA's microloan program's new focus on urban agriculture operations and niche market lending, as well as increased support for producers seeking direct loans for farm ownership in the face of increasing land values across the country.

FSA has a significant initiative underway to streamline and automate the Farm Loan Program customer-facing business process. For the over 26,000 producers who submit a direct loan application annually, FSA has made several impactful improvements including:

- The Loan Assistance Tool that provides customers with an interactive online, step-by-step guide to identifying the direct loan products that may be a fit for their business needs and to understanding the application process.
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USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In the Biden-Harris administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit www.usda.gov.

Filing CCC-941 Adjusted Gross Income Certifications

If you have experienced delays in receiving Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) payments, Loan Deficiency Payments (LDPs) and Market Gains on Marketing Assistance Loans (MALs), it may be because you have not filed form CCC-941, *Adjusted Gross Income Certification*.

If you don't have a valid CCC-941 on file for the applicable crop year you will not receive payments. All farm operator/tenants/owners who have not filed a CCC-941 and have pending payments should IMMEDIATELY file the form with their recording county FSA office. Farm operators and tenants are encouraged to ensure that their landowners have filed the form.

FSA can accept the CCC-941 for 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022. Unlike the past, you must have the CCC-941 certifying your AGI compliance before any payments can be issued.

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