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## Keeping Livestock Inventory Records

Livestock inventory records are necessary in the event of a natural disaster, so remember to keep them updated.

When disasters strike, the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) can help you if you've suffered excessive livestock death losses and grazing or feed losses due to eligible natural disasters.

To participate in livestock disaster assistance programs, you'll be required to provide verifiable documentation of death losses resulting from an eligible adverse weather event and must submit a notice of loss to your local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss of livestock is apparent. For grazing or feed losses, you must submit a notice of loss to your local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent and should maintain documentation and receipts.

You should record all pertinent information regarding livestock inventory records including:

- Documentation of the number, kind, type, and weight range of livestock
- Beginning inventory supported by birth recordings or purchase receipts.

For more information on documentation requirements, contact your Natrona County USDA Service Center at 307-261-5436 ex2 or visit [fsa.usda.gov](https://fsa.usda.gov).

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## USDA Hiring Engineers, Natural Resource Specialists Nationwide to Strengthen Inflation Reduction Act Implementation, Enhance Agricultural Conservation

USDA announced it is ramping up hiring for key positions that will help strengthen agricultural conservation efforts and turn President Biden's Investing in America agenda into action. The available positions include engineers, civil engineering technicians and natural resource specialists, building on other large-scale hiring announcements earlier this year.

Today's announcement is funded by \$19.5 billion from President Biden's Inflation Reduction Act. The new NRCS engineers and engineering technicians will play a critical role in solving a host of natural resource problems for agricultural producers and local communities. Their projects may involve stream restoration, erosion control, developing water systems for livestock, improving and conserving irrigation water and restoring wetlands. They may also help communities recover from natural disasters.

Natural resource specialists perform a variety of duties to help landowners meet their conservation objectives. This may include assisting in the implementation of conservation plans, conducting scientific

studies and performing on-site evaluations with customers. Their work enhances conservation program delivery and helps build resilient farms and communities across America.

### **How to Apply**

NRCS posted an announcement for engineering technicians on June 26 and natural resource specialists on July 3. Interested candidates can find more information and apply by searching for these job titles on [USAjobs.gov](https://www.usajobs.gov).

To qualify for these positions, candidates must meet the education requirements, or a combination of education and experience requirements, as outlined in the job announcement. General qualifications for the engineering and natural resource management job series are also available on [OPM.gov](https://www.opm.gov). Additional information on career opportunities at NRCS is available on the agency's [careers webpage](#).

### **More Information**

Over the next several years, NRCS expects to add over 4,400 new employees to its federal workforce, in addition to over 3,000 team members through partner organizations, to help with Inflation Reduction Act implementation.

NRCS is a federal agency that helps farmers, ranchers and forest landowners conserve soil, water and other natural resources. Employees provide technical expertise and conservation planning. Financial assistance is available for a wide variety of conservation programs. NRCS has offices in USDA Service Centers nationwide.

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## **USDA Develops Simplified Direct Loan Application to Improve Customer Service**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has developed a simplified direct loan application to provide improved customer experience for producers applying for loans from the Farm Service Agency (FSA). The simplified direct loan application enables producers to complete a more streamlined application, reduced from 29 to 13 pages. Producers will also have the option to complete an electronic fillable form or prepare a traditional, paper application for submission to their local FSA farm loan office. The paper and electronic versions of the form will be available starting March 1, 2023.

Approximately 26,000 producers submit a direct loan application to the FSA annually, but there is a high rate of incomplete or withdrawn applications, due in part to a challenging and lengthy paper-based application process. Coupled with the Loan Assistance Tool released in October 2022, the simplified application will provide all loan applicants access to information regarding the application process and assist them with gathering the correct documents before they begin the process. This new application will help farmers and ranchers submit complete loan applications and reduce the number of incomplete, rejected, or withdrawn applications.

In October 2022, USDA launched the Loan Assistance Tool, an online step-by-step guide that provides materials to help an applicant prepare their farm loan application in one tool. Farmers can access the Loan Assistance Tool by visiting [farmers.gov/farm-loan-assistance-tool](https://farmers.gov/farm-loan-assistance-tool) and clicking the 'Get Started' button. The tool is built to run on any modern browser like Chrome, Edge, Firefox, or the Safari browser. A version compatible with mobile devices is expected to be available by the summer. It does not work in Internet Explorer.

The simplified direct loan application and Loan Assistance Tool are the first of multiple farm loan process improvements that will be available to USDA customers on farmers.gov in the future. Other improvements that are anticipated to launch in 2023 include:

- An interactive online direct loan application that gives customers a paperless and electronic signature option, along with the ability to attach supporting documents such as tax returns.

- An online direct loan repayment feature that relieves borrowers from the necessity of calling, mailing, or visiting a local Service Center to pay a loan installment.

USDA provides access to credit to approximately 115,000 producers who cannot obtain sufficient commercial credit through direct and guaranteed farm loans. With the funds and direction Congress provided in Section 22006 of the Inflation Reduction Act, USDA took action in October 2022 to [provide relief to qualifying distressed borrowers](#) while working on making transformational changes to loan servicing so that borrowers are provided the flexibility and opportunities needed to address the inherent risks and unpredictability associated with agricultural operations.

Soon, all direct loan borrowers will receive a letter from USDA describing the circumstances under which additional payments will be made to distressed borrowers and how they can work with their FSA local office to discuss these options. Producers can explore all available options on all FSA loan options at [fsa.usda.gov](https://fsa.usda.gov) or by contacting their [local USDA Service Center](#).



## USDA Service Center

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### Program Technician

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### County Committee:

Heather Harlan, Chair  
William Kossert, Vice Chair  
Mitch Falkingburg Member  
Roy Jarrard, Alternate  
Brendon Grant, Alternate

Next COC Meeting:  
To Be Announced

### District Conservationist

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