



- [Message from Farm Service Agency \(FSA\) State Executive Director Doris Washington](#)
- [Upcoming Events and Workshops](#)
- [Farm Service Agency Now Accepting Nominations for Farmers and Ranchers to Serve on Local County Committees](#)
- [Top 6 Emergency Relief Program Checklist Items for Eligible Farmers](#)
- [USDA to Allow Producers to Request Voluntary Termination of Conservation Reserve Program Contract](#)
- [Double-Cropping](#)
- [Farmers.gov Feature Helps Producers Find Farm Loans that Fit Their Operation](#)
- [Communication is Key in Lending](#)
- [Ask USDA available to answer questions about FSA programs](#)
- [Farmers.gov Features Help You Manage Your USDA Business Online](#)
- [NRCS Announces Conservation Funding Opportunities for 2022](#)
- [USDA Reminds Producers Considering Broadcast Seeding of Crop Insurance Options](#)
- [Rates and Dates](#)

Message from Farm Service Agency (FSA) State Executive Director Doris Washington

Greetings

United States Department of Agriculture (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. Applications may be submitted via www.grants.gov for [Composting and Food Waste Competitive Agreements](#) and [UAIP grants](#). Pre-recorded webinars on the purpose, project types, eligibility and basic requirements for submitting applications will be posted at usda.gov/urban. Email UrbanAgriculture@usda.gov with any questions.

Farm Service Agency's (FSA) County Committee Election season begins this month. Please contact your local FSA office today to find out how to get involved in your county's election. Also, check with your local USDA Service Center to see if your LAA is up for election this year. FSA encourages all eligible producers to nominate themselves and/or another eligible producer, to run for office. The nomination period is June 15 through August 1, 2022. Nomination forms (FSA-669A's) are available:

- at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections>, scroll down to the links under “Election Materials” and CLICK “2022 Nomination Form”
- by picking up FSA-669A at your local FSA office
- by calling your local office and requesting FSA-669A be sent to you.

The new urban county committee (UCOC) locations are Chicago, Detroit, Grand Rapids, Los Angeles, Brooklyn, and Oakland. The six new locations were selected based on a consideration of data that included opportunity for economic growth, diversity, proximity to tribal nations, as well as the number of farm-to-table projects, urban farms, community and residential gardens, and green infrastructure projects within metropolitan and suburban areas. They join 11 previously announced UCOCs in Phoenix, Atlanta, New Orleans, Minneapolis-St. Paul, St. Louis, Albuquerque, Cleveland, Portland, Philadelphia, Dallas, and Richmond. Like rural county committee members, urban committee members make important decisions about how FSA programs are administered locally. Each urban and suburban county committee will be composed of three elected members who will serve a term of up to three years. Urban farmers who participate in USDA programs in the areas selected are encouraged to participate by nominating and voting for themselves or others.

Agricultural producers and handlers who are certified organic, along with producers and handlers who are transitioning to organic production, can now apply for the USDA Organic and Transitional Education Certification Program (OTECP) and Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP), which help producers and handlers cover the cost of organic certification, along with other related expenses. Applications for OTECP and OCCSP are both due October 31, 2022.

USDA is allowing Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) participants who are in the final year of their CRP contract to request voluntary termination of their CRP contract following the end of the primary nesting season for fiscal year 2022. Participants approved for this one-time, voluntary termination, will not have to repay rental payments. This flexibility was implemented to help mitigate the global food supply challenges caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine and other factors. USDA also announced additional flexibilities for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP).

FSA is mailing letters to producers with expiring acres that detail this flexibility and share other options, such as re-enrolling sensitive acres in the CRP Continuous signup and considering growing organic crops. Producers will be asked to make the request for voluntary termination in writing through their local USDA Service Center. If approved for voluntary termination, preparations can occur after the conclusion of the primary nesting season. Producers will then be able to hay, graze, begin land preparation activities and plant a fall-seeded crop before October 1, 2022.

Participants can also choose to enroll all or part of their expiring acres into the Continuous CRP signup for 2022. If producers are not planning to farm the land from their expiring CRP contract, the Transition Incentives Program (TIP) may also provide them two additional annual rental payments after their contract expires on the condition that they sell or rent their land to a beginning or veteran farmer or rancher or a member of a socially disadvantaged group. Producers interested in the Continuous CRP signup, CLEAR 30, or TIP should contact FSA by Aug. 5, 2022.

To find your local FSA office, please visit farmers.gov/service-locator.

Visit www.farmers.gov to learn more about FSA Programs.

Upcoming Events and Workshops

The USDA Arkansas Farm Service Agency (FSA) is committed to educating producers on available programs and loans. FSA representatives will be available at the following workshops and conferences. Producers interested in attending these conferences/workshops should follow the registration or RSVP instructions listed below.

Jun 17th - 2022 NBGC Model Farm Series – Conyer Farm, Pine Bluff, AR The National Black Growers Council (NBGC) has announced its 2022 Model Farm Series. Field Days will be held in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, and Louisiana. This series gives area growers a glimpse of new technologies and practices. Conyer Farm will host on Friday, June 17, 2022, at 2319 East 38th Avenue, Pine Bluff, Arkansas. **Rhonda O’Guinn, Arkansas’ Outreach Specialist and Kanika Davis, National Outreach Specialist will present on Heirs’ Property. Rod Woods, Jefferson County Executive Director; and Vanessa Moore, FSA Farm Loan Manager, will be in attendance to answer any questions pertaining to FSA Programs.** For more information, please visit www.nationalblackgrowerscouncil.com or call 202-641-4197.

Jun 30th – ALCDC Community Economic Development Outreach Summit Arkansas Land and Farm Development Corporation (ALFDC) is hosting a Community Economic Development Outreach Summit. **Christa Kimbrell, Desha County Executive Director, will present on FSA Programs and Heirs' Property.** The conference will be held Thursday, June 30, 2022, and is free to attend. The opening session begins at 2:00pm. For those wishing to attend the conference in person, the meeting site will be the Dumas Community Center, 18 Belmont Street, Dumas, Arkansas. For those wishing to attend the conference virtually, please register and join the meeting at the following Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYsfqqqDssHt2Pw4op9colyrrVmJcDIm2n>. Please contact ALCDC at 870.734.3005 or alcldc1934@yahoo.com for additional information. Their website is <https://alcldc.webs.com>.

Jul 11th – The Chickamauga Nation USDA Outreach Virtual Meeting The Chickamauga Nation is hosting a virtual USDA Outreach Meeting on Monday, July 11, 2022, from 5:45pm – 7:45pm. The meeting will include presentations from FSA, NASS, and NRCS. **Terri McManus, Farm Program Chief, will present on Farm Programs and Lori Lavender, Farm Loan Program Chief, will present on Farm Loan Programs.** For those wishing to attend, please join the meeting at the following Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3223657519?pwd=dzBMQ1Rld2hVbk95WS9VcHJmaUN5Zz09>. You may also dial by your location: +1 646 558 8656 US (New York), +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC), +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago), +1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose), +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma), and +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston). The Meeting ID is: 322 365 7519 and Passcode is: 570671. You may also find your local number at the following link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3223657519?pwd=dzBMQ1Rld2hVbk95WS9VcHJmaUN5Zz09>. Please contact The Chickamauga Nation at 479-522-7985 or www.ChickamaugaNation.com for additional information.

Jul 12th – The Chickamauga Nation USDA Outreach Virtual Meeting The Chickamauga Nation is hosting an in-person, USDA Outreach Meeting, on Tuesday, July 12, 2022, from 6:00pm – 8:00pm. The meeting will include presentations from FSA, NASS, and NRCS. **Dylan Bowman, Howard County Executive Director, will present on FSA Programs.** The meeting will be held at University of Arkansas Cossatot, 1558 US-371, Nashville, Arkansas. Then Meeting is free to attend. Please contact The Chickamauga Nation at 479-522-7985 or www.ChickamaugaNation.com for additional information.

Jul 14th – The Chickamauga Nation USDA Outreach Virtual Meeting The Chickamauga Nation is hosting an in-person, USDA Outreach Meeting, on Thursday, July 14, 2022, from 5:45pm – 7:45pm. The meeting will include presentations from FSA, NASS, and NRCS. **Paige Yarber, Sebastian/Crawford/Scott County Executive Director, will present on FSA Programs.** The meeting will be held at the Sebastian County Extension Service Center - (Chaffee Crossing), 7600 Taylor Avenue, Barling, Arkansas. Then Meeting is free to

attend. Please contact The Chickamauga Nation at 479-522-7985 or www.ChickamaugaNation.com for additional information.

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

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) is now accepting nominations for county committee members. Elections will occur in certain Local Administrative Areas (LAA) for members. LAAs are elective areas for FSA committees in a single county or multi-county jurisdiction. This may include LAAs that are focused on an urban or suburban area.

County committee members make important decisions about how Federal farm programs are administered locally. All nomination forms for the 2022 election must be postmarked or received in the local FSA office by Aug. 1, 2022.

Agricultural producers who participate or cooperate in a USDA program and reside in the LAA that is up for election this year, may be nominated for candidacy for the county committee. 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 producers, women, 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. Producers serving on FSA county committees play a critical role in the day-to-day operations of the agency. Committee members are vital to how FSA carries out disaster programs, as well as conservation, commodity and price support programs, county office employment and other agricultural issues.

Urban and Suburban County Committees

The 2018 Farm Bill directed USDA to form urban county committees as well as 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. The urban county committees will work to encourage and promote urban, indoor and other emerging agricultural production practices. Additionally, the new county committees may address areas such as 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 will provide outreach to ensure urban producers understand USDA programs and serve as the voice of other urban producers and assist in program implementation that support the needs of the growing urban community.

The following urban and suburban county committees will hold elections this year Phoenix, Atlanta, New Orleans, Minneapolis-St. Paul, St. Louis, Albuquerque, N.M., Cleveland, Portland, Ore., Philadelphia, Dallas and Richmond, Va.

USDA recently [announced six new urban county committees](#) in Chicago, Detroit, Grand Rapids, Los Angeles, Brooklyn, and Oakland. Elections will be held for these locations at a later date.

Learn more at farmers.gov/urban.

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. Urban farmers should use an [FSA-669-A-3](#) for urban county committees. The form and other information about FSA county committee elections are available at fsa.usda.gov/elections.

Election ballots will be mailed to eligible voters beginning Nov. 7, 2022. Producers can find their local USDA Service Center at farmers.gov/service-locator.

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.

Top 6 Emergency Relief Program Checklist Items for Eligible Farmers

FSA recently began mailing 303,000 pre-filled applications for the Emergency Relief Program (ERP), a new program designed to help agricultural producers impacted by wildfires, droughts, hurricanes, winter storms, and other qualifying natural disasters experienced during calendar years 2020 and 2021.

The past few years have been tough to say the least. As producers have dealt with the continued impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, they have also struggled to recover from more frequent, more intense natural disasters. I am grateful that Congress passed, and President Biden signed into law the *Extending Government Funding and Delivering Emergency Assistance Act* (P.L. 117-43), which includes \$10 billion in critical emergency relief.

After extensive stakeholder outreach, including with producers and groups that have not always been included in USDA programs, our team began work developing a responsive, easier-to-access program that could be rolled out in phases. We're now rolling out the first phase of ERP, which uses existing [Federal Crop Insurance](#) or [Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program](#) (NAP) data as the basis for calculating initial payments.

By leveraging existing data, we will be able to deliver approximately \$6 billion in assistance on a faster timeline; at the same time, my team and I are committed to ensuring that producers who do not have existing data on file with USDA are captured in the second phase of ERP, which will be explicitly focused on filling gaps in previously implemented emergency assistance.

To apply for ERP Phase 1, here's what you need to do:

1. Check Your Mailbox

The form being mailed to you includes eligibility requirements, outlines the application process, and provides estimated ERP payment calculations. Producers will receive a separate application form for each program year in which an eligible loss occurred. Receipt of a pre-filled application is not confirmation that a producer is eligible to receive an ERP phase one

payment. This application takes about 0.176 hours (that's less than 15 minutes) for producers to complete, compared to the former Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program – Plus application which took several hours for producers to complete and even longer for FSA staff.

The deadline to return completed ERP applications to FSA is **Friday, July 22, 2022**. *If you have NAP coverage, you will receive pre-filled ERP applications later this summer. Details on ERP Phase 2 will be forthcoming as well.*

2. Check Your Eligibility

ERP covers losses to crops, trees, bushes, and vines due to a qualifying natural disaster event in calendar years 2020 and 2021. Eligible crops include all crops for which crop insurance or NAP coverage was available, except for crops intended for grazing. Qualifying natural disaster events include wildfires, hurricanes, floods, derechos, excessive heat, winter storms, freeze (including a polar vortex), smoke exposure, excessive moisture, qualifying drought*, and related conditions.

**Lists of [2020](#) and [2021](#) drought counties eligible for ERP are available online.*

3. Check Required Forms on File with FSA

Producers must have the following forms on file with FSA:

- 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).
- 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.

If you have previously participated in FSA programs, you will likely have these required forms on file. However, if you're uncertain or want to confirm the status of your forms, contact your [local FSA county office](#).

4. Check Historically Underserved Status with FSA, If Applicable

The ERP payment percentage for historically underserved producers, including beginning, limited resource, socially disadvantaged, and veteran farmers, and ranchers will be increased by 15% of the calculated ERP payment.

To qualify for the higher payment percentage, eligible producers must have the following form on file with FSA:

- Form CCC-860, *Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, Beginning and Veteran Farmer or Rancher Certification*.

5. Check Your Future Insurance Coverage

All producers who receive ERP phase one payments are statutorily required to purchase crop insurance, or NAP coverage where crop insurance is not available, for the next two available crop years, as determined by the Secretary.

Coverage requirements will be determined from the date a producer receives an ERP payment and may vary depending on the timing and availability of crop insurance or NAP for a

producer's particular crops. The final crop year to purchase crop insurance or NAP coverage to meet the second year of coverage for this requirement is the 2026 crop year.

6. Check Your bank

Once the completed ERP application for payment is submitted to and signed by FSA, producers who have direct deposit should look for payment within three business days.

More Information

We have additional resources, including:

- [ERP May 16, 2022 New Release](#)
- [ERP Fact Sheet](#)
- [Answers to Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#)
- [Emergency Relief Webpage](#)
- [ERP Notice of Funding Availability](#)

In addition to ERP, FSA is also implementing the first phase of the new Emergency Livestock Relief Program. At this time, FSA has made more than \$588 million in payments to impacted livestock producers.

Bottom line, we take your feedback seriously, and we wanted to deliver this relief as soon as possible. We learned from previous relief programs, and we're excited to be getting this to you as swiftly as we can.

USDA to Allow Producers to Request Voluntary Termination of Conservation Reserve Program Contract

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will allow Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) participants who are in the final year of their CRP contract to request voluntary termination of their CRP contract following the end of the primary nesting season for fiscal year 2022. Participants approved for this one-time, voluntary termination will not have to repay rental payments, a flexibility implemented this year to help mitigate the global food supply challenges caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine and other factors. Today, USDA also announced additional flexibilities for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP).

FSA is [mailing letters to producers](#) with expiring acres that detail this flexibility and share other options, such as re-enrolling sensitive acres in the CRP Continuous signup and considering growing organic crops. Producers will be asked to make the request for voluntary termination in writing through their local USDA [Service Center](#).

If approved for voluntary termination, preparations can occur after the conclusion of the [primary nesting season](#). Producers will then be able to hay, graze, begin land preparation activities and plant a fall-seeded crop before October 1, 2022. For land in colder climates, this flexibility may allow for better establishment of a winter wheat crop or better prepare the land for spring planting.

Organic Considerations

Since CRP land typically does not have a recent history of pesticide or herbicide application, USDA is encouraging producers to consider organic production. USDA's Natural Resources

Conservation Service (NRCS) provides [technical and financial assistance](#) to help producers plan and implement conservation practices, including those that work well for organic operations, such as pest management and mulching. Meanwhile, FSA offers [cost-share for certification costs](#) and other fees.

Other CRP Options

Participants can also choose to enroll all or part of their expiring acres into the Continuous CRP signup for 2022. Important conservation benefits may still be achieved by re-enrolling sensitive acres such as buffers or wetlands. Expiring water quality practices such as filter strips, grass waterways, and riparian buffers may be eligible to be reenrolled under the Clean Lakes, Estuaries, and Rivers (CLEAR) and CLEAR 30 options under CRP. Additionally, expiring continuous CRP practices such as shelterbelts, field windbreaks, and other buffer practices may also be re-enrolled to provide benefits for organic farming operations.

If producers are not planning to farm the land from their expiring CRP contract, the Transition Incentives Program (TIP) may also provide them two additional annual rental payments after their contract expires on the condition that they sell or rent their land to a beginning or veteran farmer or rancher or a member of a socially disadvantaged group.

Producers interested in the Continuous CRP signup, CLEAR 30, or TIP should contact FSA by Aug. 5, 2022.

NRCS Conservation Programs

USDA also encourages producers to consider NRCS conservation programs, which help producers integrate conservation on croplands, grazing lands and other agricultural landscapes. EQIP and CSP can help producers plant cover crops, manage nutrients and improve irrigation and grazing systems. Additionally, the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP), or state or private easement programs, may be such an option. In many cases, a combination of approaches can be taken on the same parcel. For example, riparian areas or other sensitive parts of a parcel may be enrolled in continuous CRP and the remaining land that is returned to farming can participate in CSP or EQIP and may be eligible to receive additional ranking points.

Other Flexibilities to Support Conservation

Additionally, NRCS is also offering a new flexibility for EQIP and CSP participants who have cover cropping including in their existing contracts. NRCS will allow participants to either modify their plans to plant a cover crop (and instead shift to a conservation crop rotation) or delay their cover crop plans a year, without needing to terminate the existing contract. This will allow for flexibility to respond to market signals while still ensuring the conservation benefits through NRCS financial and technical assistance for participating producers.

More Information

Producers and landowners can learn more about these options by contacting FSA and NRCS at their local [USDA Service Center](#).

Double-Cropping

Each year, state committees review and approve or disapprove county committee recommended changes or additions to specific combinations of crops.

Double-cropping is approved when two specific crops have the capability to be planted and carried to maturity for the intended use, as reported by the producer, on the same acreage

within a crop year under normal growing conditions. The specific combination of crops recommended by the county committee must be approved by the state committee.

Double-cropping is approved in Arkansas on a county-by-county basis. Contact your local FSA Office for a list of approved double-cropping combinations for your county.

A crop following a cover crop terminated according to termination guidelines is approved double cropping and these combinations do not have to be approved by the state committee.

Farmers.gov Feature Helps Producers Find Farm Loans that Fit Their Operation

Farmers and ranchers can use the *Farm Loan Discovery Tool* on farmers.gov to find information on USDA farm loans that may best fit their operations.

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers a variety of loan options to help farmers finance their operations. From buying land to financing the purchase of equipment, FSA loans can help.

USDA conducted field research in eight states, gathering input from farmers and FSA farm loan staff to better understand their needs and challenges.

How the Tool Works

Farmers who are looking for financing options to operate a farm or buy land can answer a few simple questions about what they are looking to fund and how much money they need to borrow. After submitting their answers, farmers will receive information on farm loans that best fit their specific needs. The loan application and additional resources also will be provided.

Farmers can download application quick guides that outline what to expect from preparing an application to receiving a loan decision. There are four guides that cover loans to individuals, entities, and youth, as well as information on microloans. The guides include general eligibility requirements and a list of required forms and documentation for each type of loan. These guides can help farmers prepare before their first USDA service center visit with a loan officer.

Farmers can access the *Farm Loan Discovery Tool* by visiting farmers.gov/fund and clicking the "Start" button. Follow the prompts and answer five simple questions to receive loan information that is applicable to your agricultural operation. The tool is built to run on any modern browser like Chrome, Edge, Firefox, or the Safari browser, and is fully functional on mobile devices. It does not work in Internet Explorer.

About Farmers.gov

In 2018, USDA unveiled farmers.gov, a dynamic, mobile-friendly public website combined with an authenticated portal where farmers will be able to apply for programs, process transactions, and manage accounts.

The *Farm Loan Discovery Tool* is one of many resources on farmers.gov to help connect farmers to information that can help their operations. Earlier this year, USDA launched the *My Financial Information* feature, which enables farmers to view their loan information, history, payments, and alerts by logging into the website.

USDA is building farmers.gov for farmers, by farmers. In addition to the interactive farm loan features, the site also offers a Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool. Farmers can visit farmers.gov/recover/disaster-assistance-tool#step-1 to find disaster assistance programs that can help their operation recover from natural disasters.

For more information, contact your local County USDA Service Center or visit farmers.gov.

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 local County USDA Service Center or visit fsa.usda.gov.

Ask USDA available to answer questions about FSA programs

Ask USDA is now available as a tool for FSA customers to ask questions about FSA programs and services.

Ask USDA, available at ask.usda.gov is similar to AskFSA, which was decommissioned Sept. 21, but it also provides information for all USDA programs. Ask USDA allows USDA customers to search for and read answers about FSA programs and services in the same location as they read about other USDA programs and services.

Customers are able to submit questions through email, chat, and phone if they need more information. This improved customer service approach provides a one-stop shopping experience that covers all of USDA's many programs.

Farmers.gov Features Help You Manage Your USDA Business Online

Farmers.gov provides a secure, single desktop- and mobile device-accessible authenticated portal for FSA, NRCS and RMA customer-facing features. As we've continued to add more content and capabilities, farmers.gov has quickly become the premier online hub for customers to find resources, submit applications and assistance requests, and make connections.

The farmers.gov portal also enables you to:

- View, upload, download, and e-sign documents.
 - Request financial assistance, including submitting a program application.
-

- View and submit conservation requests.
- View technical references and submit questions.
- Access information on current and past conservation practices and plans.
- Report practice completion and request practice certification.
- View detailed information on all previous and ongoing contracts.
- Have the authority as an FSA and/or NRCS customer to work in the portal and act on behalf of your active power-of-attorney entitlements and your current authorities for business entities.

You'll also receive an email letting you know that an NRCS document needs your signature, which you can quickly and easily sign online in the portal. These conservation features join several others already available through the farmers.gov portal, including the ability to view farm loan information and farm records. Capabilities include:

- View, print and export detailed farm records such as cropland, base acres, yields, CRP acres, land ownership details, and much more;
- View, print and export farm/tract maps that can be provided to lenders, chemical or fertilizer providers, and FSA for reporting acreage and crop insurance agents; and
- Export common land unit (field) boundaries as ESRI shapefiles.

To access your information, you'll need a [USDA eAuth account](#) to login to farmers.gov. After obtaining an eAuth account, producers should visit [farmers.gov](#) and sign into the site's authenticated portal via the [Sign In/Sign Up link](#) at the top right of the website. In addition to the self-service features available by logging into farmers.gov, the website also has ample information on USDA programs, including pandemic assistance, farm loans, disaster assistance, conservation programs and crop insurance. Recently, USDA updated the navigation and organization of the site as well as added some new webpages, including "[Get Involved](#)," "[Common Forms](#)," and "[Translations](#)." [Learn more about these changes.](#)

NRCS Announces Conservation Funding Opportunities for 2022

USDA has several fiscal year 2022 assistance opportunities for agricultural producers and private landowners for key programs, such as the [Environmental Quality Incentives Program \(EQIP\)](#), [Conservation Stewardship Program \(CSP\)](#), [Agricultural Conservation Easement Program \(ACEP\)](#), [Regional Conservation Partnership Program \(RCP\)](#) and [Agricultural Management Assistance \(AMA\)](#) program.

Through conservation programs, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides technical and financial assistance to help producers and landowners make conservation improvements on their land that benefit natural resources, build resiliency and contribute to the nation's broader effort to combat the impacts of climate change.

Applying for Assistance

NRCS accepts applications for its conservation programs year-round. State Technical Committees, composed of representatives from conservation and agricultural-related organizations, work with NRCS to set state-specific, ranking dates to evaluate applications for funding. These dates account for producer needs, staff workload and ensure potential participants have ample opportunity to apply. Producers should apply by their state's ranking dates to be considered for funding in the current cycle.

Funding is provided through a competitive process. [State-specific, ranking dates](#) for all programs are available. Applications received after ranking dates will be automatically deferred to the next funding period.

Program Options

EQIP provides cost share assistance for producers to use 170-plus conservation practices to address a wide variety of resource concerns. Within EQIP, Conservation Incentive Contracts allow producers to further target priority resource concerns. CSP helps producers take their conservation activities to the next level through comprehensive conservation and advanced conservation activities. ACEP helps producers enroll wetlands, grasslands and farmlands into easements for long-term protection. Additionally, through RCPP, producers and landowners can work with partners who are co-investing with NRCS on targeted projects.

Historically Underserved Producer Benefits

Special provisions are also available for [historically underserved producers](#). For EQIP, historically underserved producers are eligible for advance payments to help offset costs related to purchasing materials or contracting services up front. In addition, historically underserved producers can receive higher EQIP payment rates (up to 90% of average cost). NRCS sets aside EQIP, CSP and ACEP funds for historically underserved producers.

Conservation Practices and Climate

NRCS conservation programs play a critical role in USDA's commitment to partnering with farmers, ranchers, forest landowners and local communities to deliver climate solutions that strengthen agricultural operations and rural America. States may prioritize a variety of voluntary conservation practices through these NRCS programs, including those that support climate-smart agriculture and forestry (CSAF).

In fiscal year 2022, EQIP and CSP will provide targeted funding for CSAF practices, and Conservation Incentive Contracts – a new EQIP program – will be available nationwide with an emphasis on CSAF practices. Building on these efforts, NRCS will also prioritize climate investments through ACEP, RCPP and Conservation Innovation Grants.

Producers, landowners and forest managers interested in applying for assistance should contact the NRCS at their [local USDA Service Center](#).

USDA Reminds Producers Considering Broadcast Seeding of Crop Insurance Options

USDA reminds agricultural producers of the option to request an Unrated Practice or Type (TP) written agreement through their insurance company to insure broadcast seeded crops when the policy prohibits the practice or is unavailable for the crop in the county. The broadcast practice may be suitable when producers are delayed from planting timely because of cold, wet weather during the planting period.

If the requirements of a written agreement request are met, broadcast seeding may be made insurable under the non-conventional practice, which is a crop that is planted in a two-step operation:

- The seed is first broadcast by any method onto the surface of a seedbed, which has been properly prepared for the planting method and production practice.
- The seed is subsequently incorporated into the soil at the proper depth in a timely manner.

Non-conventional planted soybeans are currently insurable without a written agreement in 21 southwestern Minnesota counties and 31 northwestern Iowa counties.

The deadline to request a TP written agreement for crops with a March 15 Sales Closing Date is July 15. However, if a written agreement is requested after the crop is planted, a favorable crop inspection appraisal will be required before insurance attaches.

Learn more about [prevented planting](#) and [replanting](#). For assistance with a crop insurance claim, producers should contact their crop insurance agent. A list of crop insurance agents is available at all USDA Service Centers and online at the [RMA Agent Locator](#). If producers have additional questions, they can contact RMA's Regional Office in St. Paul at (651) 290-3304.

Rates and Dates

Selected Interest Rates for June 2022		Dates to Remember	
90-Day Treasury Bill	0.625		
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	3.625	06/15/2022	County Committee (COC) Election Nomination Period
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	3.750		
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.500	07/15/2022	Acreage reporting spring seeded crops & other crops (Note: crops insured under NAP may have an earlier acreage reporting date. Check with local county office for verification).
Emergency Loans	3.750	08/01/2022	Last date to file COC Nomination or for a Nomination to be postmarked.
Farm Storage Facility Loans (5 years)	2.875	11/07/2022	COC Election Ballots mailed to Eligible Voters
Farm Storage Facility Loans (10 years)	2.875	11/21/2022	COC "Reminder to Vote" postcards mailed
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	3.000	12/05/2022	Final Date for COC Ballots to be returned to the County Office.
		01/02/2022	Newly Elected COC Members take Office



Arkansas USDA
700 West Capitol Room 3416 Little Rock,
Arkansas 72201

FSA Phone: 501-301-3000
FSA Fax: 855-652-2082

NRCS Phone: 501-301-3100
NRCS Fax: 855-681-7044

Please contact your local Office for questions specific to your operation or county.
To find contact information for your local office visit one of the websites below.

www.farmers.gov
www.fsa.usda.gov
www.ar.fsa.usda.gov
www.nrcs.usda.gov

FSA State Executive Director
Doris Washington

NRCS State Conservationist
Mike Sullivan

FSA State Committee Meeting: 2nd Wednesday and Thursday of each Quarter

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).
