



Farm Service Agency  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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## USDA to Open Signup for the Conservation Reserve Program and CRP Grasslands in Early 2021

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Contact: [FPAC.BC.Press@usda.gov](mailto:FPAC.BC.Press@usda.gov)

**SPRINGFIELD, Illinois, November 16, 2020** – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced the 2021 signup periods for general Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and CRP Grasslands offers. General signup for CRP will be open from January 4, 2021 to February 12, 2021; signup for CRP Grasslands runs from March 15, 2021 to April 23, 2021. Both programs are competitive and provide annual rental payments for land devoted to conservation purposes.

“The Conservation Reserve Program and the many focused programs that come under it, like CRP Grasslands, are some of our most critical tools we have to help producers better manage their operations while conserving natural resources,” said William Graff, State Executive Director. “As one of our nation’s largest conservation endeavors, CRP has proven to protect our Nation’s valuable resources; and next year’s signup gives our farmers and ranchers an opportunity to enroll in CRP for the first time or continue their participation for another term.

### **Enrollment Options**

#### **CRP?General Signup**

Through [CRP](#), farmers and ranchers establish long-term, resource-conserving plant species, such as approved grasses or trees, to control soil erosion, improve water quality and enhance wildlife habitat on cropland. Farmers and ranchers who participate in CRP help provide numerous benefits to the nation’s environment and economy. CRP general signup is held annually. The competitive general signup includes increased opportunities for enrollment of wildlife habitat through the [State Acres For Wildlife Enhancement \(SAFE\)](#) initiative.

#### **Grasslands Signup**

[CRP Grasslands](#) helps landowners and operators protect grassland, including rangeland, pastureland, and certain other lands while maintaining the areas as grazing lands. Protecting grasslands contributes positively to the economy of many regions, provides biodiversity of plant and animal populations, and improves environmental quality. A separate CRP Grasslands signup is offered each year following general signup.

Signed into law in 1985, CRP is one of the largest private-lands conservation programs in the United States. It was originally intended to primarily control soil erosion and potentially stabilize commodity prices by taking marginal lands out of production. The program has evolved over the years, providing many conservation and economic benefits. The program marks its 35-year anniversary this December. Program successes include:

- Preventing more than 9 billion tons of soil from eroding, which is enough soil to fill 600 million dump trucks;
- Reducing nitrogen and phosphorous runoff relative to annually tilled cropland by 95 and 85 percent, respectively;
- Sequestering an annual average of 49 million tons of greenhouse gases, equal to taking 9 million cars off the road;
- Creating more than 3 million acres of restored wetlands while protecting more than 175,000 stream miles with riparian forest and grass buffers, which is enough to go around the world seven times; and
- Benefiting bees and other pollinators and increasing populations of ducks, pheasants, turkey, bobwhite quail, prairie chickens, grasshopper sparrows and many other birds.

The successes of CRP contribute to USDA's [Agriculture Innovation Agenda](#) and its goal of reducing the environmental footprint of U.S. agriculture by half by 2050. Earlier this year, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue announced the department-wide initiative to align resources, programs and research to position American agriculture to better meet future global demands.

For more information on CRP, visit [fsa.usda.gov](https://fsa.usda.gov) or contact your [local FSA county office](#).

## **Farm Service Agency:**

1400 Independence Ave.  
SW Washington, DC 20250

## **Contact:**

FPAC Press Desk

[FPAC.BC.Press@usda.gov](mailto:FPAC.BC.Press@usda.gov)