
USDA Offers Resources for Ohio Maple Producers

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COLUMBUS, OH, March 29, 2021 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) offers technical expertise and financial assistance to help Ohio maple producers fund their operations, conserve natural resources and recover from natural disasters. Maple producers are encouraged to contact their local USDA Service Center to learn about resources to support their operations both during the harvest season and throughout the year.

“We know this is a busy time for our maple producers,” said Mark VanHoose, acting State Executive Director for USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) in Ohio. “Whether you’ve been a producer in our state for years or are just getting started, we encourage you to contact your local USDA Service Center to learn about programs and services to fit your business needs.” John Wilson, Acting State Conservationist for USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), agrees. “I encourage Maple producers, especially operations interested in organic certification to reach out to NRCS,” he adds. “Our local offices offer one-on-one technical assistance and financial support to help strengthen your operation.”

Funding Opportunities for Maple Producers

FSA offers funding opportunities to help maple producers start, expand and maintain their operations.

FSA’s [Farm Storage Facility Loan Program](#) provides low-interest financing so producers can build or upgrade facilities to store certain commodities. Maple sap and maple syrup are both eligible, and equipment and facilities such as sap tanks, certain hauling trucks and storage space for maple syrup qualify. Eligible facilities and equipment may be new or used, permanently affixed or portable.

Additionally, there are several types of farm loans available to help maple producers finance their businesses. These loans are administered through FSA and offer access to funding for a wide range of agricultural needs, from securing land and constructing buildings to financing the purchase of equipment.

Maple producers are encouraged to visit farmers.gov/fund or contact the FSA office at their [local USDA Service Center](#) to learn more about USDA funding opportunities. Through our [Farm Loan Discovery Tool](#), you can answer five quick questions to learn about farm loans that might be right for you.

Conservation Resources for Maple Producers

NRCS offers programs and services that benefit Ohio maple producers while conserving natural resources. Maple producers are encouraged to contact the NRCS office at their [local USDA Service Center](#) for free, one-on-one technical support. Visit farmers.gov/conserv to learn more about conservation at USDA and working with your local conservationists.

Producers in Ohio may also qualify for NRCS programs that support conservation efforts across maple operations. The [Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#) (EQIP) provides financial assistance and technical support to help maple producers address natural resource concerns through voluntary conservation practices. Multiple conservation practices for qualifying maple producers may be available through EQIP, including those to improve energy efficiency, filter sap and improve evaporation rates.

NRCS's [Conservation Stewardship Program](#) is available for eligible maple producers to maintain and improve existing conservation systems and adopt additional conservation practices to address priority resource concerns. Enhancements might include a forest management plan to strengthen an existing sugar bush or sugar bush management to establish or maintain species diversity.

Recovery Support for Maple Producers

FSA and USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) offer programs to help maple producers prepare for and recover from the impacts of natural disasters.

Federal crop insurance is administered through RMA to provide a robust and reliable farm safety net, regardless of the size and scope of natural disasters. RMA's [Whole-Farm Revenue Protection](#) covers all commodities on the farm, including maple, under one insurance policy.

FSA's [Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program](#) helps producers manage risk through coverage for both crop losses and crop planting that was prevented due to natural disasters. The eligible or "noninsured" crops cover agricultural commodities not covered by federal crop insurance, including specialty crops such as maple sap. **NOTE: Producers must be enrolled in the NAP program and have purchased coverage for map sap in the crop year in which the loss incurred to receive program benefits following a qualifying natural disaster. The deadline for NAP coverage for 2021 was December 31, 2020. Maple producers interested in future NAP coverage, should contact their FSA**

County office to discuss 2022 NAP coverage options, which gives producers an opportunity to explore a variety of options and levels to determine the best protection level for their operation.

Through the [Tree Assistance Program](#), FSA offers financial assistance to eligible orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes and vines lost due to natural disasters. This includes eligible maple trees from which an annual crop is produced for commercial purposes.

Maple producers are encouraged to visit farmers.gov/recover or contact their [local USDA Service Center](#) to learn more about USDA resources to manage risk and recover from natural disasters. Use our [Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool](#) to learn about USDA disaster assistance programs that might be right for you in five simple steps. For an overview of available disaster assistance, view or download the [USDA Disaster Assistance Programs At A Glance](#) brochure.

More Information

While USDA offices are currently closed to visitors because of the pandemic, Service Center staff continue to work with agricultural producers via phone, email and other digital tools. To conduct business, please contact your local [USDA Service Center](#). Additionally, more information related to USDA's response and relief for producers can be found at farmers.gov/coronavirus.

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