



Farm Service Agency
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

U.S. Department of Agriculture Leadership in Georgia Meets with Coastal Georgia Producers and Agricultural Leaders to Discuss Farm Service Agency Programs and Resources

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ATHENS, Ga., July 6, 2023 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) Georgia State Executive Director, Arthur Tripp and Georgia FSA staff, recently visited with oyster and clam producers on Sapelo Island. They toured the seeding facilities at Sapelo Sea Farms, Georgia's oldest clam farm and learned more about their involvement in Georgia's burgeoning aquaculture industry. While in the area, Tripp hosted a roundtable meeting in Jesup with agricultural leaders and coastal Georgia producers representing a cross-section of the production agriculture industry to discuss current and future participation in FSA programs.

"These meetings provide valuable opportunities to amplify the many ways FSA supports agricultural producers, including support for the unique needs of the aquacultural industry. We had very productive, mutually beneficial conversations with these producers about what FSA programs and resources best suit their operations," said Tripp. "It is imperative that we ensure that producers of all commodities in Georgia have access to federal program information that may help them start, expand or maintain their operation."

During the roundtable, Tripp highlighted the [Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program \(ELAP\)](#), which provides financial assistance to eligible producers for losses due to disease and certain adverse weather events or loss conditions. Specific to aquaculture, ELAP provides payments to eligible farm-raised fish producers, including oyster and clam producers, for death losses of eligible bait fish or game fished and for purchased or produced farm-raised fish feed losses caused by eligible adverse weather or loss conditions.

Additionally, FSA offers risk management coverage for aquaculture operations through the [Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program \(NAP\)](#). NAP provides financial assistance to producers of noninsurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory, or prevented planting occur due to natural

disasters. For NAP coverage, eligible aquacultural species include any species of aquatic organisms grown as food for human consumption, fish raised as feed for fish that are consumed by humans, and ornamental fish propagated and reared in an aquatic medium.

More disaster assistance information can be found on farmers.gov, [?Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool](#), [?Disaster-at-a-Glance fact sheet](#), and [?Farm Loan Discovery Tool](#).

FSA also offers a variety of [direct and guaranteed farm loans](#) to producers who are unable to secure commercial financing for ownership and operating expenses. These loans can help producers replace essential property, purchase inputs like livestock, equipment, feed and seed, cover family living expenses or refinance farm-related debts and other needs. You can find out which of these loans may be right for you by using FSA's [Farm Loan Discovery Tool](#). FSA also has several loan servicing options available to borrowers who are unable to make scheduled payments on their farm loan debt to FSA because of reasons beyond their control.

FSA is committed to equitably serving all farmers, rancher, and agricultural partners through commodity price support, conservation, disaster assistance, and loan programs. Georgia's FSA has 62 offices and 340 employees around the state. Producers are encouraged to [contact their local USDA service center](#) and schedule a meeting to determine the programs and loans that best suit their operational goals. During the first visit with FSA, producers should bring documents including proof of identity, proof of ownership, leases, and entity identification status.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. Under 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 [?usda.gov](#).

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