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Message from the FSA State Director

Greetings from the South Dakota State FSA Office!

As we start the turn into the back side of summer, many southeastern South Dakota farm families are faced with the aftermath of upwards of 18 inches of rain in a four-day period last month.

The rains that overwhelmed the southeastern portion of the state were too much for the Jim; the Vermillion; and the Big Sioux Rivers to handle. For the month of June, the National Weather service reported that Sioux Falls recorded more than 11 inches of rain. In comparison the city received 13 inches total during the month of June during the previous five years.

Now that the water has receded, the damage is evident in the fields. FSA has several programs that can be of assistance to farm and ranch families.

FSA's [Emergency Conservation Program](#) (ECP) can assist producers with financial and technical assistance to restore fencing, damaged farmland, and remove debris from feed stocks, water supplies and feeding areas.

Producers who experience livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality or sell injured livestock at a reduced price may be eligible for the [Livestock Indemnity Program](#) (LIP). To participate in LIP, producers will have to provide acceptable documentation of death losses or evidence of reduced sales resulting from an eligible adverse weather event and must submit a notice of loss to the FSA office.

The other program that may be able to offer assistance, is the [Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program](#) (ELAP). If you had a feed or grazing loss due to the flooding, the ELAP program can provide assistance with feed and grazing losses.

As with all FSA programs, please reach out to your local office to notify them of any losses you may have experienced before you start on fence replacement or debris removal.

Lastly, don't forget that nomination forms for FSA [County Committee elections](#) are due back in the office August 1, 2024. If you are interested in serving your neighbors, please stop in your local FSA office to pick up the form or go [online](#).

Please be safe with your farming and ranching activities!

Sincerely,

Steve Dick
State Executive Director
USDA-Farm Service Agency

Message from the NRCS State Conservationist

Greetings,

It's been difficult seeing the flooded fields and other community damage from the recent heavy rains that parts of South Dakota experienced. Know that NRCS staff are working to assess damages that may be eligible for our Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) program. The EWP program assists local governments with the cost of addressing hazards such as debris removal and streambank stabilization to relieve imminent hazards to life and property. Interested local government leaders can learn more at the [Emergency Watershed Protection webpage](#) and then may contact the local NRCS office or our State Conservation Engineer Jim Reedy at James.Reedy@usda.gov or John Schmidt, EWP Program Manager, at John.Schmidt@usda.gov with additional questions.

Small grain harvest time has arrived in South Dakota and with it also the opportunity to plant cover crops into the stubble. "Guidance for [Cover Crops in South Dakota](#)" is a popular web page on the NRCS South Dakota web site. Also, through our partnership with the SD Soil Health Coalition and SDSU Extension, an updated 'Cover Crop Characteristics' poster is available for plant selection. The poster features the NRCS Table 1 for Cover Crops which is a quick reference of 20 plant characteristics such as rooting depth and salinity tolerance for over 40 common cover crop plants. This is a great tool for agronomists, seed suppliers, and producers planning cover crop plantings. This poster is available by [download here](#) or visit the local NRCS office for your copy.

Some South Dakota producers are receiving a mailed request to participate in a joint USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service and NRCS survey. Know that if you receive this survey request that your participation is critical to better understand grazing conservation practice adoption. In accordance with federal law, your responses will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed in identifiable form. See the article below titled 'Survey Aims to Help USDA Understand Landowner Conservation Choices' to learn more.

Thank you to all South Dakota farmers, ranchers, land managers, landowners, and conservation partners who are moving the needle of conservation in our state.

Sincerely,

Tony Sunseri
State Conservationist
USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service

Important Dates & Deadlines

July 15, 2024 - 2023 ARC-IC Production Certification Deadline

July 15, 2024 - Acreage Reporting Deadline for 2024 Crop Year spring-seeded crops, perennial forage & Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage

July 18, 2024 - RMA Nursery Value Select workshop. [See more details here.](#)

July 24, 2024 - FSA State Committee Meeting

July 25, 2024 - Be the Link: FSA County Committee Nomination and Election Process Virtual Event. [Click here to join at noon CST on July 25.](#)

August 1, 2024 - Last day to file FSA County Committee nomination forms at the local USDA Service Center

How to Document Flood Losses

If you've suffered excessive livestock death losses and grazing or feed losses due to recent floods, you may be eligible for disaster assistance programs through the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA).

The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) offers payments to you for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather and the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) provides emergency relief for losses due to feed or water shortages, disease, adverse weather, or other conditions, which are not adequately addressed by other disaster programs.

To participate in LIP, you will be required to provide verifiable documentation of death losses resulting from an eligible adverse weather event, and you must complete and submit the notice of loss to FSA no later than the annual program payment application date, which is 60 calendar days following the program year in which the loss occurred. To participate in ELAP, you must submit a notice of loss to your local FSA office no later than the annual program application deadline of January 30 following the program year in which the loss occurred and should maintain documentation and receipts.

You should record all pertinent information regarding livestock losses due to the eligible adverse weather or loss condition, including:

- Documentation of the number, kind, type, and weight range of livestock that have died, supplemented if possible by photographs or video records of ownership and losses;
- Rendering truck receipts by kind, type and weight - important to document prior to disposal;
- Beginning inventory supported by birth recordings or purchase receipts;
- Documentation from Animal Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Natural Resources, or other sources to substantiate eligible death losses due to an eligible loss condition;
- Documentation that livestock were removed from grazing pastures due to an eligible adverse weather or loss condition;

- Costs of transporting livestock feed to eligible livestock, such as receipts for equipment rental fees for hay lifts and snow removal;
- Feed purchase receipts if feed supplies or grazing pastures are destroyed;

For more information on these programs and documentation requirements, contact your local County USDA Service Center or visit fsa.usda.gov/disaster.

USDA Offers Assistance and Resources for Recovery from and Prevention of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza H5N1 in Dairy Herds

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has confirmed the detection of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), also known as H5N1, in dairy cattle in 12 states including Colorado, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, North Carolina, New Mexico, Ohio, South Dakota, Texas and Wyoming. To protect the U.S. livestock industry from the threat posed by HPAI H5N1 USDA is taking a number of actions with our federal partners.

On April 24, APHIS announced a federal order that includes mandatory testing for interstate movement of dairy cattle and mandatory reporting of influenza A detections in livestock. In addition to the Federal Order mandates, USDA provides several voluntary testing and monitoring options, including the [HPAI Dairy Herd Status Program](#) announced on May 31, 2024. APHIS has released a list of [requirements and recommendations](#) that apply to interstate moving of lactating dairy cattle, [testing guidance](#) for livestock, and answers to [frequently asked questions](#). Producers are encouraged to visit the APHIS HPAI Livestock Detection [website](#) for information about these programs and requirements, as well as the most comprehensive and timely updates about this rapidly evolving situation.

Assistance for Milk Loss

Confirmed H5N1 Positive Test Results Required for Recovery Assistance

Producers who incur milk losses in their dairy herds due to HPAI H5N1 can now apply for financial assistance through the USDA's updated Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-raised Fish Program (ELAP). USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) expanded ELAP policy through the rule-making process to assist with financial losses resulting from reduced milk production when cattle are removed from commercial milking in dairy herds having a confirmed positive H5N1 test. Positive tests must be confirmed through the USDA's APHIS' National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL).

To apply, **producers need to submit** the following to FSA:

- Proof of herd infection through a confirmed positive H5N1 test (based on USDA's APHIS [H5N1 case definition](#)) on individual animal or bulk tank samples confirmed by APHIS' NVSL;
- A notice of loss indicating the date when the loss is apparent, which is the sample collection date for the positive H5N1 test; and

- An application for payment certifying the number of eligible adult dairy cows removed from production, the month the cows were removed from production, and the producer's share in the milk production.

The final date to file a notice of loss and application for payment for eligible losses is 30 days after the end of the prior calendar year, which is **January 30**.

Note: To determine livestock and producer eligibility for ELAP H5N1 assistance, to submit an application or if you've not previously conducted business with FSA, contact your local FSA county office for details. [Find your local office](#). Other online resources include [frequently asked questions](#) and a [fact sheet](#).

Loans for Biosecurity Implementation

FSA also provides direct and guaranteed loans for farmers and ranchers that can assist with implementation of biosecurity measures for their operations. Loans can assist with:

- Installing physical barriers to facilitate quarantine, to prevent livestock interaction with wildlife, and to prevent unauthorized access by visitors
- Purchase of disinfectant, footbaths, and disposable footwear and clothing;
- Veterinary costs related to vaccination and general animal health;
- Testing of feed and water sources for toxins and other disease;
- Costs associated with responsible manure disposal and management;
- Costs associated with cleaning and disinfecting livestock transportation equipment; and
- Other biosecurity measures recommended by USDA or other applicable agencies.

To learn more about loans, producers can use the:

- [Loan Assistance Tool](#) – helps producers better navigate the farm loan process. The online Loan Assistance Tool provides producers needing agricultural financing with an interactive, step-by-step guide.
- [Farm Loans Overview Factsheet](#) – provides an overview of all FSA direct and guaranteed loans, and eligibility requirements.
- [Farm Loans Homepage](#) – gives in-depth farm loan information, including fact sheets, for those who don't want to use the online Loan Assistance Tool.

To learn more about ELAP or farm loans, producers should contact the FSA at the [local USDA Service Center](#).

To learn more about APHIS requirements and resources, visit APHIS' [Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza \(HPAI\) Detections in Livestock webpage](#).

Dr. Julie Gauthier, Executive Director of Veterinary Services' Field Operations and Policy Liaison,



USDA-APHIS, Answers Questions About H5N1 in Dairy Herds

Dr. Julie Gauthier, Executive Director of Veterinary Services' Field Operations and Policy Liaison, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), offers her expertise regarding H5N1 in the United States, its current effects in our dairy industry, and the process and importance of testing your cows to help protect them, your operation, and the dairy industry as a whole. [Read our farmers.gov Ask the Expert blog for the full interview with Dr. Gauthier and learn more about available assistance through USDA Farm Service Agency's Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-raised Fish Program \(ELAP\).](#)

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

Nominations are now being accepted for farmers and ranchers to serve on local U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees. These committees make important decisions about how federal farm programs are administered locally. All nomination forms for the 2024 election must be postmarked or received in the local FSA office by Aug. 1, 2024.

Elections for committee members will occur in certain Local Administrative Areas (LAA). LAAs are elective areas for FSA committees in a single county or multi-county jurisdiction and may include LAAs that are focused on an urban or suburban area.

Customers can locate their LAA through a geographic information system locator tool available at fsa.usda.gov/elections and determine if their LAA is up for election by contacting their local FSA office.

Agricultural producers may be nominated for candidacy for the county committee if they:

- Participate or cooperate in a USDA program.
- Reside in the LAA that is up for election this year.

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, women, urban 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. Committee members are vital to how FSA carries out disaster recovery, conservation, commodity and price support programs, as well as making decisions on county office employment and other agricultural issues.

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. This form and other information about FSA county committee elections are available at fsa.usda.gov/elections.

All nomination forms for the 2024 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by the Aug. 1, 2024, deadline. Election ballots will be mailed to eligible voters in November 2024.

Late-Filed Acreage Reports

FSA can now accept late-filed acreage reports without a field visit if the producer can provide proof of existence and disposition. Producers are required to pay the late filed fee.

Proof of existence of the crop includes, but is not limited to:

- seed receipts showing the amount, variety, and date purchased;
- receipts for cleaning, treating, etc., for seed planted on the farm;
- a written contract or documentation of an oral contract to produce a specific crop;
- evidence that was accepted and approved by the RMA or another USDA agency;
- precision planting, spraying, or harvesting geospatial data or maps;
- drone photos with location and notable physical boundaries;
- other aerial or ground imagery with the ability to determine date, acres, and crop.

Proof of disposition of the crop includes, but is not limited to:

- receipts showing number and units sold if the sale can be positively identified as sale of the crop for the farm for the year represented;
- a written contract or documentation of an oral contract to produce a specific crop;
- records showing the crop was fed to livestock;
- documentation of payment for custom harvesting indicating acreage, location, and crop year;
- evidence that was accepted and approved by another USDA agency.

USDA Expands Funding Opportunities for Specialty Crop Growers to Help Offset On-Farm Food Safety Expenses for 2024 and 2025



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is expanding the [Food Safety Certification for Specialty Crops \(FSCSC\) program](#) to now include medium-sized businesses in addition to small businesses. Eligible specialty crop growers can apply for assistance for expenses related to obtaining or renewing a food safety certification. The program has also been expanded to include assistance for 2024 and 2025 expenses. Producers can apply for assistance on their calendar year 2024 expenses beginning July 1, 2024, through Jan. 31, 2025. For program year 2025, the application period will be Jan. 1, 2025, through Jan. 31, 2026.

Program Details

FSCSC assists specialty crop operations that incurred eligible on-farm food safety certification and expenses related to obtaining or renewing a food safety. FSCSC covers a percentage of the specialty crop operation's cost of obtaining or renewing its certification, as well as a portion of related expenses.

Eligible FSCSC applicants must be a specialty crop operation; meet the definition of a small or medium-size business and have paid eligible expenses related to certification.

- A small business has an average annual monetary value of specialty crops sold by the applicant during the three-year period preceding the program year of no more than \$500,000.
- A medium size business has an average annual monetary value of specialty crops the applicant sold during the three-year period preceding the program year of at least \$500,001 but no more than \$1,000,000.

Specialty crop operations can receive the following cost assistance:

- Developing a food safety plan for first-time food safety certification.
- Maintaining or updating an existing food safety plan.
- Food safety certification.
- Certification upload fees.
- Microbiological testing for products, soil amendments and water.
- Training.

FSCSC payments are calculated separately for each eligible cost category. Details about payment rates and limitations are available at farmers.gov/food-safety.

Applying for Assistance

Interested applicants have until Jan. 31, 2025, to apply for assistance for 2024 eligible expenses. FSA will issue payments as applications are processed and approved. For program year 2025, the application period will be January 1, 2025, through January 31, 2026. FSA will issue 50% of the calculated payment for program year 2025 following application approval, with the remaining amount to be paid after the application deadline. If calculated payments exceed the amount of available funding, payments will be prorated.

Specialty crop producers can apply by completing the [FSA-888-1](#), *Food Safety Certification for Specialty Crops Program (FSCSC) for Program Years 2024 and 2025* application. The application,

along with the [AD-2047](#), *Customer Data Worksheet* and [SF-3881](#), *ACH Vendor/Miscellaneous Payment Enrollment Form*, if not already on file with FSA, can be submitted to the FSA office at any USDA Service Center nationwide by mail, fax, hand delivery or via electronic means. Alternatively, producers with an eAuthentication account can apply for FSCSC [online](#). Producers interested in creating an eAuthentication account should visit farmers.gov/sign-in.

Specialty crop producers can also call 877-508-8364 to speak directly with a FSA employee ready to assist. Visit farmers.gov/food-safety for additional program details, eligibility information and forms needed to apply.

More Information

To learn more about FSA programs, producers can contact their local [USDA Service Center](#). Producers can also prepare maps for acreage reporting as well as manage farm loans and view other farm records data and customer information by [logging into their farmers.gov account](#). Producers without an account can [sign up today](#).

Reminder to Control Weeds

If you're enrolled in the Conservation Reserve (CRP), Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs, you must protect all cropland and noncropland acres on the farm from wind and water erosion and **noxious weeds**. By signing CRP, ARC county or individual contracts, and PLC contracts, you agree to effectively control noxious weeds on the farm according to sound agricultural practices. If you fail to take necessary actions to correct a maintenance problem on your farm that is enrolled in ARC or PLC, the County Committee may elect to terminate your contract for the program year.

Contact your local FSA Office with questions.

Applying for Youth Loans

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) makes loans to youth to establish and operate agricultural income-producing projects in connection with 4-H clubs, FFA and other agricultural groups. Projects must be planned and operated with the help of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is \$5,000.

Youth Loan Eligibility Requirements:

- Be a citizen of the United States (which includes Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) or a legal resident alien
- Be 10 years to 20 years of age
- Comply with FSA's general eligibility requirements
- Conduct a modest income-producing project in a supervised program of work as outlined above
- Demonstrate capability of planning, managing and operating the project under guidance and assistance from a project advisor. The project supervisor must

recommend the youth loan applicant, along with providing adequate supervision.

For help preparing the application forms, contact your local USDA Service Center or visit fsa.usda.gov.

Preauthorized Debit Available for Farm Loan Borrowers

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) has implemented pre-authorized debit (PAD) for Farm Loan Program (FLP) borrowers. PAD is a voluntary and alternative method for making weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, quarterly, semi-annual or annual payments on loans.

PAD payments are pre-authorized transactions that allow the National Financial and Accounting Operations Center (NFAOC) to electronically collect loan payments from a customer's account at a financial institution.

PAD may be useful if you use nonfarm income from regular wages or salary to make payments on loans or adjustment offers or for payments from seasonal produce stands. PAD can only be established for future payments.

To request PAD, customers, along with their financial institution, must fill out form RD 3550-28. This form has no expiration date, but a separate form RD 3550-28 must be completed for each loan to which payments are to be applied. A fillable form can be accessed on the USDA Rural Development (RD) website at rd.usda.gov/publications/regulations-guidelines. Click forms and search for "Form 3550-28."

If you have a "filter" on the account at your financial institution, you will need to provide the financial institution with the following information: Origination ID: 1220040804, Agency Name: USDA RD DCFO.

PAD is offered by FSA at no cost. Check with your financial institution to discuss any potential cost. Preauthorized debit has no expiration date, but you can cancel at any time by submitting a written request to your local FSA office. If a preauthorized debit agreement receives three payment rejections within a three-month period, the preauthorized debit agreement will be cancelled by FSA. The payment amount and due date of your loan is not affected by a cancellation of preauthorized debit. You are responsible to ensure your full payment is made by the due date.

For more information about PAD, contact your local USDA Service Center or visit fsa.usda.gov.

Exploration, Invention, and Evolution Still Abound After 125 Years of Soil Surveys

It's 1899, and as the world prepares for a new century, railroad tycoon Edward Henry Harriman, along with a large crew, embarks on a two-month expedition to catalog the flora and fauna of the Alaskan coast; Joshua Lionel Cowen invents and patents the electric flash-lamp; and aviation pioneer Wilbur Wright discovers wing warping for aircraft wings.

With the spirit of exploration and invention in the air, Congress recognized the vital role soil surveys play in guiding agricultural development and supporting community planning and resource development. On May 3, 1899, Congress authorized funds for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to investigate the soil resources of the United States in the field and laboratory, and the first soil surveys began. By the end of 1899, USDA mapped 720,000 acres and published four separate soil surveys in parts of Maryland, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Utah, and New Mexico.

After 125 years, USDA soil surveyors and partners continue to map soils in new areas, collecting data on what are called static soil properties, or those that change over thousands of years. They also revisit mapped soils to explore [dynamic soil properties](#), such as soil organic carbon and structure, which change within the human timescale. These changes can be from natural factors, like soils eroding during a severe rain event, and human-caused factors, like soils building carbon as a result of good conservation practices.

Our knowledge of soils increases each year as we evolve with [new technology](#), types of field and laboratory equipment, and ideas. Our experience observing, investigating, and researching in the field leads to new standards, methodology, and new and improved [products](#) for public use. Traditionally, we have conducted soil surveys on land to determine the best soils for growing corn, building a pond, maintaining wetlands, or supporting roads; however, today, we even conduct soil surveys from specialized boats in coastal zones!

The USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is founded on the need to understand the soil resources of our nation. Data-driven and science-based, we fulfill a legislative mandate to inventory the soil resources and keep the soil survey relevant to ever-changing needs through the [National Cooperative Soil Survey \(NCSS\)](#).

We set standards in classification, mapping, and laboratory procedures with the largest and highest resolution inventory of natural resource data in the world used by our staff for conservation planning, application ranking criteria, and Highly Erodible Land determinations, among other services. The USDA NRCS' world-renowned [Kellogg Soil Survey Laboratory](#) (KSSL) provides data and standards to the international community, as well as for our state conservation staff, supporting conservation activities involving soil health, wetlands, and ecological sites.

How Can Soil Surveys Help You?

Soil data assist farmers, ranchers, foresters, land managers, and conservation planners in effectively managing, conserving, and appraising their most valuable investment—the soil. The data can help determine soil-related hazards or limitations that affect home sites. It can help estimate the potential crop or forage production of a farmer's land. Soil data can also help determine the suitability of soil for housing areas, onsite sewage disposal systems, pipelines, buildings, landfills, and recreation areas.

The fruits of our labor with soil surveys are visible in the productive soils we walk on, the food we eat, and the air we breathe. We will continue to build upon our 125-year legacy by providing soil data to inform, protect, and sustain future generations.

Visit the NRCS website for more information about [soil surveys](#) in your area or to locate your [State Soil Scientist](#). [Web Soil Survey](#) is a one-stop shop for free soil information and soil maps, properties, and interpretations. Learn more about NRCS' [Soil Science](#).

Climate Quick Reference Guides Now on Farmers.gov

Even when data is at your fingertips it can sometimes still be hard to find what you're looking for – especially when it comes to climate information.

USDA's Climate Hubs and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) are helping to meet that need by providing [Climate Quick Reference Guides](#) for agricultural producers and landowners seeking basic and easily usable climate information.

The Climate Quick Reference Guides, which first published in July 2022 and were updated in August 2023, are [now available on farmers.gov](#). They offer a simple way for users to view historic and projected weather and climate change information at the state and county levels. The easy-to-use guides show key data changes in climate most impactful to agricultural production in the local areas including max temperatures and precipitation amounts by season.

Guides are available for almost every county nationwide following a two-year effort by the Climate Hubs and NRCS.

Those interested in using the guides can access their state-level data by clicking on their state or searching for it by name. If they are interested in accessing county level, they must first select a state and then click the “view counties” button before either searching for the county by name or selecting it on the map. The requested data can then be viewed by clicking the “get guide” button.

The Climate Quick Reference Guides can be especially useful when NRCS conservationists are working with farmers, ranchers and private forest landowners to address natural resource concerns on their land and implement climate-smart agriculture and forestry activities. The guides use layers of science-based maps and graphs to show temperature, precipitation and even crop loss data. The data can in turn help the public make informed decisions for their farms, ranches, or forest lands.

Survey Aims to Help USDA Understand Landowner Conservation Choices

If you are a grazing or forest landowner or manager, you may be asked this summer to participate in a survey designed to help the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) improve the financial and technical services it offers grazing and forest landowners.

A joint project between NRCS and the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), the [Conservation Practice Adoption Motivations Survey \(CPAMS\)](#) is aimed at understanding why people choose to use or not use different conservation practices.

NASS began surveying more than 40,000 grazing and forest operations in June 2024. Respondents are encouraged to participate online but may also respond through the mail or by sending a fax. You can learn more about CPAMS by watching [this short video](#).

USDA Hosts Informational Workshops on Newly Expanded Nursery Insurance Option

USDA has [expanded its Nursery Value Select \(NVS\) crop insurance](#) program to all counties in all states, and the USDA Risk Management Agency (RMA) is encouraging interested nursery producers to learn more about the program through upcoming informational workshops. These sessions will be valuable for producers in the newly expanded areas and especially for the Nursery Field Grown and Container (FG&C) crop insurance program, which ends beginning with the 2026 crop year.

Nursery Value Select is a pilot program that enables nursery producers to select the dollar amount of coverage that best fits their risk management needs. Its expansion is part of RMA's efforts to provide insurance options for a broader group of producers, including specialty crop producers.

There is one more Nursery Value Select workshop on **July 18**. [See more details here](#).

RMA has administered the Nursery FG&C crop insurance program for nearly 30 years. However, the program relies on a partnership between RMA and a private contractor to update and maintain the Eligible Plant List and Plant Price Schedule and associated software packages. The private contractor will be closing after providing all necessary contractual obligations for the 2025 crop year. Without access to the price schedule and associated software, the Nursery FG&C program will no longer be available to nursery producers beginning with the 2026 crop year.

Nursery Value Select will be able to offer comparable but improved risk management options for those who currently have coverage with the Nursery FG&C program, making RMA's informational workshops a valuable opportunity to learn more about Nursery Value Select and any required transitions.

Prior to the expansion, Nursery Value Select was only available in select counties in Alabama, Colorado, Florida, Michigan, New Jersey, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas and Washington. Beginning with the 2025 crop year, Nursery Value Select **will be available in all counties in all states**. The sales closing date for the 2025 crop year is May 1, 2024, or Sept. 1, 2024, as provided in the actuarial documents.

Nursery Value Select was first available in the 2021 crop year, and producers insured more than \$460 million in liabilities in crop year 2023.

Crop insurance is sold and delivered solely through private crop insurance agents. A list of crop insurance agents is available at all USDA Service Centers and online at the [RMA Agent Locator](#). Producers can learn more about crop insurance and the modern farm safety net at rma.usda.gov or by contacting their [RMA Regional Office](#).



USDA in South Dakota

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9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).

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