

In This Edition of the Ohio FSA State Newsletter:

- [A Message from the Ohio FSA State Office](#)
- [2024 Acreage Reporting Dates](#)
- [Producers with Individual Agriculture Risk Coverage Reminded to Report Yields](#)
- [FSA Seeking Nominations for Farmers and Growers to Serve on Local County Committees](#)
- [National Urban Agriculture Conference Aug. 4-6, 2024, in Detroit, MI](#)
- [USDA Expands Funding Opportunities for Specialty Crop Growers to Help Offset On-Farm Food Safety Expenses for 2024 and 2025](#)
- [Dr. Julie Gauthier, Executive Director of Veterinary Services' Field Operations and Policy Liaison, USDA-APHIS, Answers Questions About H5N1 in Dairy Herds](#)
- [New to Farming? USDA Can Help](#)
- [USDA Opens Application Period for Composting and Food Waste Reduction Cooperative Agreements](#)
- [FSA's Customer Kiosks now available](#)
- [July 2024 Loan and Interest Rates](#)
- [Dates to Remember](#)

A Message from the Ohio FSA State Office

Summer is a busy time of year for farmers and producers as well as your FSA County office. The deadline for certification of spring crop, perennial forage (pastures) and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres is **July 15**. Please remember we also need to know of failed crops prior to disposition. If you have not yet communicated with your [FSA County office](#) on this, please do so immediately.

FSA continues to accept applications for the Clean Lakes, Estuaries, And Rivers initiative or (CLEAR30). Certain water quality practices currently enrolled under Continuous CRP or CREP contracts that are expiring on September 30, 2024, may be offered into CLEAR30.

The deadline for producers to submit a new offer, an offer for re-enrolled land, or a combination of new and re-enrolled land through [Continuous CRP](#) is COB **July 31, 2024**, to have an October 1, 2024, contract start date. There are several enrollment options to consider, including:

- [Highly Erodible Lands Initiative \(HELI\)](#),
- [Lake Erie CREP](#),
- [Scioto River Watershed CREP](#),
- [Farmable Wetlands Program](#),
- Ohio offers a [Ohio Pollinator and Monarch SAFE](#) project, and the [Upland Bird SAFE](#) project in designated counties throughout Ohio. The initiative restores vital habitat in order to meet high-priority state wildlife conservation goals.

FSA continues to accept applications for the [Transition Incentive Program \(TIP\)](#) program until **August 15**. The application process can take some time, so if you are interested in FSA's conservation programs, please contact your [County FSA office](#) as soon as possible for more information and to schedule an appointment to submit an offer.

It's important to note that FSA works with new farmers and farms of all sizes. Small farmers should also report their acreage because they may be eligible for assistance in the event of a natural disaster. If this is your first year farming a tract of land, you need to make sure you have a farm number, that your tract information is current, and that you're in FSA's system. Whether you are new to farming, or just new to working with us, your county FSA office will help you register for a farm number, which is required for USDA programs and assistance. Things to bring include proof of identity, a copy of your deed or leasing documents, and any entity documentation. An article included in this newsletter provides additional details.

FSA County Committee (COC) election season continues, with the deadline to submit a nomination to serve on a local committee set for **August 1**. County Committees are important as they oversee the functions of county FSA offices and provide input on programming and local agricultural issues. For more information on this opportunity, read the article below and then contact your FSA county executive director.

Additional program details and more in-depth information is provided in our newsletter. Please don't hesitate to contact your [FSA County office](#) for questions about our programs, loans and information that is included in this newsletter edition.

2024 Acreage Reporting Dates

To comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers are encouraged to contact their FSA office to file an accurate crop certification report by the applicable deadline.

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable for:

July 15, 2024 --- Report all your Burley Tobacco, Cabbage (Planted 3/19/24-5/31/24), Corn, Grain Sorghum, Hybrid Corn Seed, Spring Oats, Popcorn, Potatoes, Soybeans, Sugar Beets, Tomatoes and all other crops. Report Perennial Forage Crops. Report Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage.

Aug. 15, 2024 --- Report Cabbage (Planted 6/1/24-7/20/24).

Sept. 30, 2024 --- Report Aquaculture.

Dec. 15, 2024 ---- Report Fall-Seeded 2025 crops, Barley, Fall Wheat, and all other Fall-Seeded Small Grains.

The following exceptions apply to the above acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.
- If a producer acquires additional acreage after the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office.

Producers should also report crop acreage they intended to plant, but due to natural disaster, were unable to plant. Prevented planting acreage must be reported on form CCC-576, Notice of Loss, no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date as established by FSA and USDA's Risk Management Agency.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policy holders should note that the acreage reporting date for NAP covered crops is the earlier of the dates listed above or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins.

If you have applied for organic certification and do not receive it before the acreage reporting deadline, you may provide the necessary documentation to FSA immediately upon receipt from the certifying agent.

FSA offers continuous certification for perennial forage. This means after perennial forage is reported once and the producer elects continuous certification, the certification remains in effect until a change is made. Check with your FSA office for more information on continuous certification.

New Option to View, Print and Label Maps on Farmers.gov

Producers with an eAuth account linked to their USDA customer record can now access their FSA farm records, maps and common land units by logging into farmers.gov. A new feature will allow producers to export field boundaries as shapefiles and import and view other shapefiles, such as precision agriculture boundaries. This will allow producers to view, print and label their own maps for acreage reporting purposes.

Producers who have authority to act on behalf of another customer as a grantee via form FSA-211 Power of Attorney, Business Partner Signature Authority, along with other signature types, or as a member of a business can now access information in the farmers.gov portal.

Producers can learn how to use the farmers.gov Farm Records Mapping functionality with this [fact sheet](#) and these [video tutorials](#).

For questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, please contact your [County FSA office](#).

Producers with Individual Agriculture Risk Coverage Reminded to Report Yields

Producers who elected Individual Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC-IC) are required to report yields annually to FSA. The final date to report production from the prior crop year

for farms enrolled in ARC-IC is **July 15**. The ARC Program is an income support program that provides payments when actual crop revenue declines below a specified guarantee level.

ARC-IC program payments are issued when the actual individual crop revenue for all covered commodities planted on the ARC-IC farm is less than the ARC-IC guarantee for those covered commodities. ARC-IC uses producer's certified yields, rather than county level yields. ARC-IC payments are dependent upon the planting of covered commodities on the farm. A producer's ARC-IC farm is defined as the sum of the producer's interest in all ARC-IC enrolled farms in the state. Producers with all farms enrolled in County Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage are not required to report production from the prior crop year.

For more information contact your [FSA County office](#).

FSA Seeking Nominations for Farmers and Growers to Serve on Local County Committees

Nominations are now being accepted for farmers and producers 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.

Urban and Suburban County Committees

The 2018 Farm Bill directed USDA to form urban county committees and 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 that work to encourage and promote urban, indoor and other emerging agricultural production practices.

Additionally, the county committees may address 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 provide outreach to ensure urban producers understand USDA programs, serve as the voice of other urban producers and assist in program implementation that support the needs of the growing urban community.

The 27 cities with urban county committees are listed at fsa.usda.gov/elections and farmers.gov/urban. Of these, ten urban county committees will hold an inaugural election this cycle.

You should contact your local FSA office today to register and find out how to get involved in your county's election, including if their LAA is up for election this year. To be considered, you 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.

National Urban Agriculture Conference Aug. 4-6, 2024, in Detroit, MI



Have you heard about the National Urban Agriculture Conference happening Aug. 4-6 in Detroit, MI? Through the conference, USDA's Farm Service Agency and lead organizer

NUag Initiative seek to build stronger connections between USDA programs and urban growers. The conference features bus tours of urban farms in Detroit; information on USDA resources; listening sessions and presentations; and information on beneficial tools, training, resources, and efforts to expand local and regional food systems. Approximately 500 attendees are expected, including USDA employees, urban farmers; educators and administrators; business and nonprofit leaders; and retail and wholesale companies.

To learn more and sign up, see the website for [conference registration](#).

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

The 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.

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](#).

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 \(ELAP\).](#)

New to Farming? USDA Can Help

If you're a new farmer or rancher, can help you get started or grow your operation through a variety of programs and services, from farm loans to crop insurance, and conservation programs to disaster assistance. We offer dedicated help to beginning farmers and ranchers. USDA considers anyone who has operated a farm or ranch for less than ten years to be a beginning farmer or rancher.

The first step is to find your local USDA Service Center by visiting farmers.gov/service-center-locator. Call your local Farm Service Agency (FSA) office to make an appointment to establish a farm number. You can establish a farm number for any land being used for agricultural purposes that is over 0.01 acre.

You'll need to bring the following to your appointment:

- Proof of identify (driver's license, social security card, IRS Employer Identification Number (EIN))
- Proof of Ownership (copy of recorded deed or recorded land contract)
- Lease agreements
- Entity Identification Status (articles of incorporation, trust and estate documents, or partnership agreement)

FSA staff will work with you one-on-one to review your documents and register your farm with FSA. Registering your farm allows you to apply for FSA and other USDA programs.

After your farm is registered, you can meet with FSA and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) staff to discuss your business and conservation goals. FSA and NRCS staff can help you determine program eligibility and walk you through the application process.

Depending on your operation, you may want to consider crop insurance. The USDA's Risk Management Agency provides crop insurance to help you manage risks on your farm. There are [many types of insurance products available](#) for a wide variety of production practices, including organic and sustainable agriculture.

More Information

- [Beginning Farmers and Ranchers](#)
 - Urban grower? Learn about our [Urban Service Centers](#)
 - New to farming?
 - [Contact your Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coordinator](#)
 - [Factsheet for Beginning Farmers and Ranchers](#)
 - Need a translator? Learn more about free, real-time [Translation Services](#)
 - Our [Guide to USDA Resources for Historically Underserved Farmers and Ranchers](#) has a worksheet to help you prepare for your first visit.
-

USDA Opens Application Period for Composting and Food Waste Reduction Cooperative Agreements

Local and tribal governments and eligible groups can apply by September 4

USDA is accepting applications for Composting and Food Waste Reduction (CFWR) pilot projects for fiscal year 2024. The cooperative agreements, using remaining funds from the American Rescue Plan Act, are jointly administered by USDA's Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). Selected projects will develop and test strategies for planning and implementing municipal compost plans and food waste reduction plans and are part of USDA's broader efforts to support urban agriculture. [Link to news release.](#)

FSA's Customer Kiosks now available



New Customer Kiosks will make your county office visits quicker and easier

The new customer kiosks from USDA's FSA are now available at every county office nationwide. These kiosks help to streamline your visit to your local county office and easily access a variety of features such as signing FSA documents, utilizing the Loan Assistance Tool, browsing USDA programs, accessing the internet, accessing necessary personal information, and signing up for a Login.gov account, which provides access to farmers.gov level two features and other USDA and U.S. Government web resources. Future kiosk functionality enhancements include a customer check-in application, self-service option for FSA program applications and documents, financial inquiries and more.

Learn more about how FSA is modernizing our customer experience. [link to blog post](#)

July 2024 Loan and Interest Rates

Farm Operating Loans, Direct	-- 5.500%
Farm Ownership Loans, Direct	-- 5.750%
Limited Resource Loans	-- 5.000%

Farm Ownership Loans, Down Payment	-- 1.750%
Farm Ownership – Joint Financing	-- 3.750%
Emergency Loans	-- 3.750%
Farm Storage Facility Loan, 3 year	-- 4.625%
Farm Storage Facility Loan, 5 year	-- 4.375%
Farm Storage Facility Loan, 7 year	-- 4.375%
Farm Storage Facility Loan, 10 year	-- 4.375%
Farm Storage Facility Loan, 12 year	-- 4.375%
Sugar Storage Facility Loans, 15 year	-- 4.500%
Commodity Loans	-- 6.125%

Dates to Remember

July 15 ---- End of primary nesting season for CRP program purposes.

July 15 ---- Final certification date to report burley tobacco; cabbage planted through May 31; corn, grain sorghum, hybrid corn seed, spring oats, potatoes, popcorn, sugar beets, tomatoes and other crops. Report perennial forage crops. Report Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage.

July 15 ---- Final Date to Report Production for the preceding Crop Year for Farms Enrolled in ARC-IC.

July 31 ---- **Deadline** for producers to submit an offer for re-enrolled land or combination new and re-enrolled land for Continuous CRP Signup 61.

August 1 --- **Last day** to file County Committee Nomination forms.

August 1 --- **Deadline** to Request farm reconstitutions and transfers for 2023.

August 15 - **Deadline** for producers to request enrollment into **Transition Incentives Program (TIP)**.

August 31 - **Deadline** to obtain 2025 NAP coverage for Aquaculture, Christmas trees, Floriculture, Ginseng, Mushrooms, Turf grass Sod and Watercress.

September 2 - Labor Day Holiday. **USDA Service Center is Closed.**

Ongoing Reminders:

ERP 2022 signup continues. The application deadline has not yet been determined and will be announced at a later date.

Reports of Failed Acreage must be filed with the FSA County Office before disposition of the crop.

Reports of Prevented Planting Acreage must be filed with the FSA County Office no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date for that county and producers of hand-harvested crops and certain perishable crops must notify FSA within 72 hours of when a loss becomes apparent.

Contact FSA right away for notice of loss deadlines and disaster program requirements.

FSA is continually receiving new applications for loan programs.

Inform the office of bank account changes.

Inform FSA if you have picked up or dropped any farm(s).

Inform FSA of farm and cropland boundary changes.

Ohio FSA State Office

200 North High Street
Room 540 Columbus, Ohio 43215
Phone: 614-255-2441

Visit the Ohio FSA website at: www.fsa.usda.gov/oh

State Executive Director:
Dr. John Patterson

Administrative Officer:
Traci Garza

Conservation Chief:
Brandi Koehler

Farm Loan Chief:
Darren Metzger

Price Support Chief:
Trevor Kerr

*Production Adjustment / Compliance and
Risk Management Chief:*
Matt Kleski

Ohio FSA State Committee Members

Theodore Finnarn, Chairperson
Fred Deel
Tracy Hundley
Thomas Jackson, Jr.
Mark Mechling