



New Jersey USDA Newsletter - March 2025

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Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program Deadline March 17



Farmers and ranchers rely on crop insurance to protect themselves from disasters and unforeseen events, but not all crops are insurable through the USDA's Risk Management Agency. The Farm Service Agency's (FSA) Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) provides producers another option to obtain coverage against disaster for these crops. NAP provides financial assistance to producers of non-insurable crops impacted by natural disasters that result in lower yields, crop losses, or prevents crop planting.

Commercially produced crops and agricultural commodities for which crop insurance is not available are generally eligible for NAP. Eligible crops include those grown specifically for food, fiber, livestock consumption, biofuel or biobased products, or value loss crops such as aquaculture, Christmas trees, ornamental nursery, and others. Contact your local FSA office to see which crops are eligible in your state and county.

Eligible causes of loss include drought, freeze, hail, excessive moisture, excessive wind or hurricanes, earthquake and flood. These events must occur during the NAP policy coverage period, before or during harvest, and the

disaster must directly affect the eligible crop. For guidance on causes of loss not listed, contact your local FSA county office.

Interested producers apply for NAP coverage using FSA form CCC-471, “Application for Coverage,” and pay the applicable service fee at the FSA office where their farm records are maintained. These must be filed by the application closing date, which varies by crop. Contact your local FSA office to verify application closing dates and ensure coverage for eligible NAP crops.

At the time of application, each producer acknowledges they have received the [NAP Basic Provisions](#), which describes NAP requirements for coverage. NAP participants must report crop acreage shortly after planting and provide verifiable or reliable crop production records when required by FSA.

Producers are required to pay service fees which vary depending on the number of crops and number of counties your operation is located in. The NAP service fee is the lesser of \$325 per crop or \$825 per producer per administrative county, not to exceed a total of \$1,950 for a producer with farming interests in multiple counties. Premiums also apply when producers elect higher levels of coverage with a maximum premium of \$15,750 per person or legal entity.

A producer’s certification on Form CCC-860 *Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, Beginning and Veteran Farmer or Rancher Certification* may serve as an application for basic NAP coverage for all eligible crops beginning with crop year 2022. These producers will have all NAP-related service fees for basic coverage waived, in addition to a 50 percent premium reduction if higher levels of coverage are elected.

For more detailed information on NAP, download the [NAP Fact Sheet](#). To get started with NAP, we recommend you contact your [local USDA service center](#).

Producers Can Now Enroll in ARC & PLC



USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) is accepting enrollments and elections for the [Agriculture Risk Coverage \(ARC\) and Price Loss Coverage \(PLC\)](#) for 2025 from Jan. 21 to April 15. ARC and PLC provide financial protections to farmers from substantial drops in crop prices or revenues and are vital economic safety nets for most American farms. The American Relief Act, 2025 extended many Farm Bill-authorized programs for another year, including ARC and PLC.

Producers can elect coverage and enroll in ARC-County (ARC-CO) or PLC, which provide crop-by-crop protection, or ARC-Individual (ARC-IC), which protects the entire farm. Although election changes for 2025 are optional, producers must enroll through a signed contract each year. Also, if a producer has a multi-year contract on the farm it will continue for 2025 unless an election change is made.

If producers do not submit their election revision by the April 15 deadline, their election remains the same as their 2024 election for commodities on the farm from the prior year. Farm owners cannot enroll in either program unless they have a share interest in the cropland.

Covered commodities include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium grain rice, safflower seed, seed cotton, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat.

USDA also reminds producers that ARC and PLC elections and enrollments can impact eligibility for some crop insurance products including Supplemental Coverage Option, Enhanced Coverage Option and, for cotton producers, the Stacked Income Protection Plan (commonly referred to as STAX).

For more information on ARC and PLC, producers can visit the [ARC and PLC webpage](#) or contact your [local USDA Service Center](#).

Beginners Guide to Crop Insurance

Crop insurance is a risk management strategy that farmers use to protect their livelihoods. By purchasing a policy through a crop insurance agent, farmers are financially protected if there are losses due to a covered cause of loss. It's not so different from car or homeowners insurance.

Start your journey out right by reading RMA's [Beginners Guide to Crop Insurance](#).



Specialty Crop Growers can Apply for 2025 On-Farm Food Safety Certification Expenses



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) reminds specialty crop producers that the application period for the [Food Safety Certification for Specialty Crops \(FSCSC\) program](#) for program year 2025 opened Jan. 1, 2025, and runs through Jan. 31, 2026. The program has been expanded to 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.

Program Details

FSCSC covers a percentage of the specialty crop operation's cost of obtaining or renewing its on-farm food safety 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

For program year 2025, the application period began Jan. 1, 2025, and runs through Jan. 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 county office at any USDA Service Center nationwide by mail, fax, hand delivery or via electronic means. Producers with an eAuthentication account can apply for FSCSC [online](#). Producers interested in creating an eAuthentication account should visit farmers.gov/sign-in.

Visit farmers.gov/food-safety for additional program details, eligibility information and application forms.

More Information

To learn more about FSA programs, producers can contact their local [USDA Service Center](#).

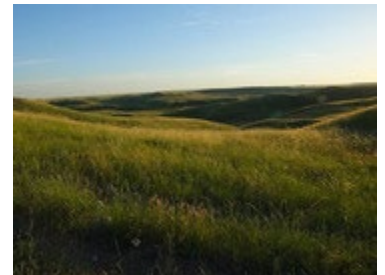
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Seed and Vendor Finder Tool for CRP Participants and Native Seed Vendors

USDA has worked with the [Conservation Biology Institute \(CBI\)](#) to design and build a free online easy-to-use [Seed and Vendor finder](#) tool to support the producers enrolling in the CRP program, along with other conservation efforts involving native plantings. CBI also partnered with the [Institute for Applied Ecology \(IAE\)](#) to address the needs of the [Native Seed Network](#) and significantly expanded the native seed customer and vendor base.

The seed and vendor finder can be found here: [Seed and Vendor Finder](#)

Currently, CBI has seeded the tool with 214 vendors found through an online search from across the country with limited profiles, and 42 have voluntarily completed full profiles which includes their plant inventory. The tool is designed for easy uploading of their profile and inventory. It also provides an opportunity for vendors without a website to have an online presence and be found by customers looking for seeds. Also check out the plant finder tool where you can find suitable plants, including pollinator friendly plants for your area and soil type. Currently we have 20+ unique visitors to the tool every day and that number is growing!



All vendors are encouraged to add their profile and inventory to the tool. You can do this easily by filling out this simple form located here: <https://crptool.org/contact/>. A member of the CBI team will send you an invite within 24 h to create your full profile.

New Jersey Counties Eligible for Emergency Loans

Several New Jersey Counties have been declared as either primary or contiguous disaster areas using the Secretarial Disaster Designation process. Under this designation, if you have operations in any primary or contiguous county, you are eligible to apply for low interest Emergency Loans.



Farmers in the following counties are eligible for [Emergency Loans](#):

- **Secretarial Designation S5908** - New Jersey
 - For Drought beginning on 5/19/2024
 - New Jersey Primary Counties: Gloucester, Salem
 - New Jersey contiguous counties: Atlantic, Camden, Cumberland
 - Loan application deadline: **08/11/2025**
- **Secretarial Designation S5907** - New Jersey
 - For Drought beginning on 6/05/2024
 - New Jersey Primary Counties: Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland
 - New Jersey contiguous counties: Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, Ocean, Salem
 - Loan application deadline: **08/11/2025**
- **Secretarial Designation S5906** - New Jersey
 - For Drought and Excessive Heat beginning on 6/01/2024
 - New Jersey Primary Counties: Burlington, Camden, Ocean
 - New Jersey contiguous counties: Atlantic, Gloucester, Mercer, Monmouth
 - Loan application deadline: **08/11/2025**
- **Secretarial Designation S5905** - New Jersey
 - For Drought and Excessive Heat beginning on 6/25/2024
 - New Jersey Primary Counties: Hunterdon, Somerset
 - New Jersey contiguous counties: Mercer, Middlesex, Morris, Union, Warren
 - Loan application deadline: **08/11/2025**
- **Secretarial Designation S5875** - New York
 - For Hurricane Debby from 08/05/2024 - 08/10/2024
 - New Jersey contiguous counties: Sussex, Passaic
 - Loan application deadline: **07/28/2025**
- **Secretarial Designation S5889** - Pennsylvania
 - For Drought beginning on 11/19/2024
 - New Jersey contiguous counties: Gloucester
 - Loan application deadline: **07/25/2025**
- **Secretarial Designation S5872** - New Jersey
 - For Excessive Rain and High Winds beginning on 07/16/2024
 - New Jersey Primary Counties: Sussex
 - New Jersey contiguous counties: Morris, Passaic, Warren
 - Loan application deadline: **07/15/2025**

- **Secretarial Designation S5871** - New Jersey
 - For Excessive Heat beginning on 06/01/2024
 - New Jersey Primary Counties: Morris, Sussex, Warren
 - New Jersey contiguous counties: Essex, Hunterdon, Passaic, Somerset, Union
 - Loan application deadline: **07/15/2025**
- **Administrator's Designation N1779** - New Jersey
 - For Excessive Rain and High Winds beginning on 07/16/2024
 - New Jersey Primary Counties: Hunterdon, Somerset
 - New Jersey contiguous counties: Mercer, Middlesex, Morris, Union, Warren
 - Loan application deadline: **05/27/2025**
- **Secretarial Designation S5785** - Delaware
 - For Drought and Excessive Heat beginning on 06/01/2024
 - New Jersey contiguous counties: Cumberland, Gloucester, Salem
 - Loan application deadline: **05/27/2025**

Emergency loans help you recover from production and physical losses due to drought, flooding and other natural disasters or quarantine.

You have eight months from the date of the declaration to apply for emergency loan assistance. FSA will consider each loan application on its own merits, taking into account the extent of losses, security available and repayment ability. You can borrow up to 100 percent of actual production or physical losses, to a maximum amount of \$500,000.

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



Subscribe to the New Jersey Farm Service Agency Calendar to receive USDA program deadlines and related information automatically on the calendar app on your device. **To subscribe just scan the QR code above or click [here](#).** *There is no cost to subscribe and you can unsubscribe at anytime.*

NEW JERSEY

Farm Service Agency

Deputy State Executive Director

Lindsay Caragher 609-587-0104

Lindsay.Caragher@usda.gov

FSA Communications Coordinator

Gabi Grunstein 848-482-7724

Gabor.Grunstein@usda.gov

Natural Resource Conservation Service

State Conservationist

Julie Hawkins 732-537-

6041 Julie.Hawkins@usda.gov

NRCS Public Affairs Specialist

Jacob Bailey 732-412-5684

Jacob.Bailey@usda.gov

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