



FACT SHEET

# Applying for USDA Programs

*This document explains how to establish eligibility for USDA Programs and details some of the steps for applying for programs through NRCS*

February 2023



## LANDOWNER APPLICATION NEEDS

If you are interested in applying for a conservation program through USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service, your first stop should be at the office of USDA's Farm Service Agency. There, a representative will help you to establish eligibility for USDA programs and you will receive a farm and tract number for your farm.

After establishing eligibility, visit your local NRCS office where staff will help you apply for conservation programs to address resource concerns on your farm. NRCS and FSA offices are usually co-located in a USDA service center to make the process seamless. You can find your service center by visiting [farmers.gov](https://www.farmers.gov) at: <https://www.farmers.gov/service-locator>.



## ESTABLISH ELIGIBILITY

Set-up an appointment to meet at the FSA office and make sure you bring:

- Proof of identity (driver's license, social security card, IRS EIN number)
- Proof of ownership (copy of recorded deed or recorded land contract)
- And/or any lease agreements
- Entity identification status (articles of incorporation, trust & estate documents, partnership agreement)

During the meeting, an FSA representative will help you fill out the eligibility documents and establish a farm and tract number if you have not already done so. You will need to complete the following forms with Farm Service Agency during the eligibility process. Some of these are required annually:

1. **Form AD-2047:** Provides your information to the FSA landowner database ☐ Complete
2. **Form AD-1026:** Certifies your land's compliance with highly erodible land conservation and wetland conservation regulations ☐ Complete



3. **Form CCC-941:** Annual form required by the IRS to certify an annual gross income of less than \$900,000 ☐ Complete
4. **Form CCC 901 and/or CCC 902:** These provide information on the owners/operators of the land being enrolled as well as information on the land itself. If an entity, member information such as Articles of Incorporation, EIN number, and other proof of entity will be needed to complete these forms.) ☐ Complete



## APPLYING FOR NRCS PROGRAMS

After establishing your eligibility, it is time to apply for NRCS programs. NRCS has a suite of programs and practices available to help you address natural resources concerns on your farm or private forestland. You can apply for multiple programs at a time, but they each require a separate application and might require different forms. An NRCS representative will help you through the process. The following documents must be provided to NRCS during the application process:

1. **Form CPA-1200:** This is your program application. You will have to complete and sign the form to apply for NRCS financial assistance. ☐ Complete
2. **A copy of the ownership deed** of all property to be included in application (for easement programs) ☐ Complete ☐ N/A
3. **A map indicating area for application.** NRCS will work with you to develop a map and adjust and confirm the area. ☐ Complete
4. **Entity Documents:** If applying as an entity (trust, LLC, incorporation, etc) you must provide legal documents of incorporation, agreement and/or signature authorities for who can sign for the entity for property conveyance or other legal actions. ☐ Complete ☐ N/A
5. **Form 1199 A:** This allows for direct deposit of program payments. You may apply for a one-time hardship waiver if you do not wish to utilize direct deposit. ☐ Complete ☐ N/A
6. **Concurrence Form CPA-1257:** If you are applying as an operator instead of owner (for programs other than easements) the provides written landowner permission for you to have control to implement, operate and maintain practices on the land ☐ Complete ☐ N/A

## WHAT HAPPENS AFTER YOU APPLY?

You will need to submit the required paperwork to the NRCS office at your local USDA Service Center prior to any program sign-up cutoff dates. While applications are accepted year-round, interested producers should submit applications by program specific ranking dates to be considered during the current funding cycle. Applications

received outside that time period will be automatically considered during the next funding cycle.

## CONSERVATION PLAN

If you do not have a conservation plan on file, the NRCS representative will schedule an appointment with you to complete the on-site assessment and plan. This helps you decide which practice(s) to include during the application process.

## PROGRAM APPLICATION & RANKING

Your NRCS representative will enter the application(s) for specific programs and ask for any additional information needed. NRCS will then assess and rank the application(s). The ranking is based on federal, state and local ranking resource concern priorities. After all applications have been evaluated and ranked, applications will be selected for funding based on the highest-ranking score and available funds.

## HISTORICALLY UNDESERVED PRODUCERS

You may be eligible for additional program benefits if you are able to apply as a:

- Limited resource farmer,
- Beginning farmer, or
- Veteran farmer, and/or
- Socially disadvantaged (minority) farmer.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you would like more information about Farm Bill Program opportunities visit farmers.gov at: [www.farmers.gov/manage/farmbill](http://www.farmers.gov/manage/farmbill). For more information about NRCS program eligibility or applying for a program, please contact your local NRCS office. You can find your local NRCS office by visiting [www.farmers.gov/service-locator](http://www.farmers.gov/service-locator). Necessary forms can be found at [www.nrcs.usda.gov/applications-and-forms](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/applications-and-forms).



## CONFIDENTIAL & PRIVATE INFORMATION

Many of the program application forms or documentation require the applicant to provide sensitive contact, financial or other confidential information. Disclosure of this data is voluntary, but failure to provide required information may result in ineligibility for a program benefit. By law and policy, confidential, private and sensitive information is protected by USDA.