

Fact Sheet: Agricultural Management Assistance Program

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Overview

The Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) Program assists agricultural producers to manage risk and voluntarily address issues such as water management, water quality, and erosion control by incorporating conservation practices into their farming operations. Producers may construct or improve water management or irrigation structures; plant trees for windbreaks or to improve water quality; and mitigate risk through production diversification or resource conservation practices, including soil erosion control, integrated pest management, or transition to organic farming.

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has leadership for the conservation provisions of AMA. The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) is responsible for an organic certification cost-share program and the Risk Management Agency (RMA) is responsible for mitigation of financial risk.

AMA is authorized under the Agricultural Risk Protection Act of 2000, Title I, Section 133 Public Law 106-224. Section 524(b), was amended by the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, (2002 Farm Bill), and further amended by The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill).

How AMA Works

By statute, AMA is available in 16 states: Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

An AMA plan of operations is required for the area covered in the application and becomes the basis for developing the AMA contract. NRCS works with the applicant to develop the plan of operations. Participants are expected to maintain cost-shared practices for the life of the practice. Contracts are for a minimum of one year after completion of the last practice, but not more than ten years.

The NRCS State Conservationist, in consultation with the State Technical Committee, determines eligible structural and/or vegetative conservation practices using a locally-led process.

Eligibility

Applicants must own or control the land within an identified AMA State and comply with adjusted gross income limitation provisions.

Eligible land includes cropland, rangeland, grassland, pastureland, non-industrial forestland, and other private land that produces crops or livestock where risk may be mitigated through operation diversification or change in resource conservation practices.



Payment Limitation

The total AMA payments (from NRCS, AMS, and RMA) shall not exceed \$50,000 per participant for any fiscal year.

How to Apply for AMA

Applications may be obtained and filed at any time with your local USDA Service Center or conservation district office. Applications may also be accepted by cooperating conservation partners approved or designated by NRCS.

Legislative Changes

The 2008 Farm Bill amended Section 524(b) (1) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act to add Hawaii as an eligible AMA state. Funding is made available through Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) for each of the fiscal years 2008 through 2012 in the authorized amount of \$15,000,000. CCC shall not use less than 50 percent of funding for NRCS conservation activities, not less than 40 percent for Risk Management Agency activities, and not less than 10 percent of funding for Agricultural Marketing Service activities.

More Information

For more information and updates about AMA or other Farm Bill topics, please refer to the U.S. Department of Agriculture Web site at: www.usda.gov/farmbill, or the NRCS Web site at: www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/AMA/.