



## Overview

The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2014 (2014 Farm Bill) continues to address the unique circumstances and concerns of traditionally underserved producers. The Natural Resources Conservation Service, as an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is committed to ensuring that its programs and services are accessible to all our customers, fairly and equitably, with emphasis on reaching the underserved and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, and tribes of our state.

# Opportunities for Historically Underserved Producers in Iowa



USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service offers voluntary Farm Bill conservation programs that benefit agricultural producers and the environment.

## Definitions

### A Beginning Farmer or Rancher means an individual or entity who:

- » Has not operated a farm or ranch, or who has operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10 consecutive years. This requirement applies to all members of an entity.
- » Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm or ranch.

### Socially Disadvantaged

A group whose members have been subject to racial or ethnic prejudice because of their identity as members of a group, without regard to their individual qualities.



These groups consist of the following:

- » American Indians or Alaskan Natives
- » Asians
- » Black or African Americans
- » Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders
- » Hispanics

*Note: Gender alone is not a covered group for the purposes of NRCS conservation programs.*

### Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher

- » A person with direct or indirect gross farm sales of not more than \$176,800 in each of the previous two years and
- » Who has a total household income at or below the national poverty level for a family of four, or less than 50 percent of county median household income in each of the previous 2 years.

### Veteran Farmer or Rancher

- » A person who served in the United States armed forces, including the reserve components thereof, and who was discharged or released from service under other than dishonorable conditions, and who meets the definition of a beginning producer.
- » For a legal entity or joint operation to be considered a VFR entity, all members must meet the definition of VFR.

### Indian Tribe/Native American

- » Indian Tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any Alaska Native village or regional or village corporation that is Federally recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States.

*These traditionally underserved groups are eligible for an increased payment rate and may receive advance payment of up to 50 percent to purchase materials and services needed to implement conservation practices included in their EQIP contract.*

*NRCS will help eligible producers develop a conservation plan, which will become the basis of the EQIP contract.*

### How to Apply

Visit your local USDA Service Center to apply or visit: [www.nrcs.usda.gov/getstarted](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/getstarted).

### More Information

For more information visit your local USDA Service Center or: [www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/people/outreach/slbfr/](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/people/outreach/slbfr/)

### Find Your Local USDA Service Center

<http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=ia>



NRCS is committed to ensuring that its programs and services are accessible to all our customers,

[www.ia.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.ia.nrcs.usda.gov)

**Natural Resources Conservation Service**

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.