USDA United States Department of Agriculture

# NEW FARMERS

From farm loans to crop insurance, and conservation programs to disaster assistance, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is here to support you and your operation.

## GET STARTED

### Contact Your Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coordinator

Each State has a coordinator that can help you with questions on working with USDA.

Find yours at **farmers.gov/manage/newfarmers/coordinators**.

### Visit Your Local USDA Service Center

USDA Service Centers are offices where you can meet face-to-face with USDA, Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) staff to discuss your vision, goals, and ways USDA can help. Steps to the process are on the next page.

## USDA SERVICE CENTER AGENCIES

### Farm Service Agency (FSA)

FSA provides disaster assistance, safety net, farm loan, and conservation programs and is the go-to agency for many USDA records. If you're new to working with USDA, your FSA team member will help you register your farm with a farm number. Depending on what you raise or grow, filing an acreage report each season can ensure you're eligible for many programs and allows you to vote in county FSA elections.

### Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

NRCS provides financial and technical assistance and easement programs for conservation on working lands. Your NRCS team member will ask about your goals for your land and can help you develop a conservation plan and file an application for the wide range of NRCS programs.

## ADDITIONAL USDA RESOURCES

### Risk Management Agency (RMA)

Using new tools provided by the Farm Bill, RMA is working to reduce crop insurance costs for beginning farmers and ranchers.

### Rural Development (RD)

USDA RD provides consultations, assistance, and funding opportunities for individuals and businesses located in rural communities.

### Cooperative Extension

USDA and agricultural colleges around the country work together to support an extensive network of State, regional, and county Cooperative Extension offices, which can help answer questions you may have about your operation and address common issues faced by agricultural producers.

# GET STARTED WITH YOUR LOCAL USDA SERVICE CENTER

Find your local USDA Service Center at **farmers.gov/service-locator**, where we can meet face-to-face to discuss your vision for your land and how we can help. Free, real-time translation service is also available at the Service Center for non-English speakers, learn more at **farmers.gov/interpret**.

## BEFORE YOUR VISIT

1. **Make an appointment**. This will ensure quick service. Our offices can get busy, especially at times around program sign-up and reporting deadlines.
2. **Prepare**. Ask what documents you should bring to help to make the most of your appointment. Examples could include lease agreements, bank account information, inventory or production records, legal paperwork, or personal identification numbers.
3. **Think about your vision**. What is your vision for your land and farm? What are your challenges?

## MORE INFORMATION

Learn more at **farmers.gov/newfarmers**.

## DURING YOUR VISIT

1. **Register for a farm number**. This is required to participate in USDA programs. Bring an official tax identification (Social Security number or employer ID) and a property deed. If you do not own the land, bring your lease agreement. If your operation is incorporated or an entity, we may need proof of your signature authority and legal ability to sign contracts with USDA.
2. **Discuss your business and conservation goals**. Your local FSA or NRCS team members need to understand your vision to recommend programs for your operation. For example, are you looking for access to capital, to rebuild after a natural disaster, or to improve your farm's soil health, improve irrigation, or attract more wildlife?
3. **Make a plan to meet conservation compliance provisions**. You'll need to file form AD-1026 to ensure wetland areas and highly erodible lands are not farmed, unless following an NRCS conservation plan. This is required for all USDA program eligibility, including disaster assistance.
4. **Verify eligibility**. For most USDA programs, producers must file a CCC-941 to verify they do not exceed an adjusted gross income of $900,000.
5. **File your program application**. We can help you complete the forms.
6. **Sign up for email or text updates.** This will help you stay informed about program signups or deadlines.

## AFTER YOUR VISIT

1. **File your acreage reports throughout the year**.
2. **Keep in touch with your local office**. Let us know if your business changes or you experience a disaster or hardship.
3. **Learn about self-service options**. Create a farmers.gov account to manage some of your USDA business outside of a Service Center.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

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