United States Department of Agriculture

Don't Lose Your USDA Benefits!

Doing any of these things requires USDA review:

- Land clearing
- Working new land
- Excavation
- Stump removal
- Creating a new drainage system
- Improving, modifying or maintaining an existing drainage system
- Land leveling
- Dredging an area
- Filling an area
- Planting a crop on land where an NRCS Highly Erodible Land or wetland determination has not been made.

Contact USDA:

To find your nearest USDA Service Center, use our office locator:

http://offices.usda.gov

Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation Compliance

Most USDA programs require you to comply with the **Highly Erodible Land** and **Wetland Conservation** provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985, as amended, which link program eligibility to farming practices designed to protect wetlands and to protect highly erodible land from excessive soil erosion. These provisions are described in form AD-1026, which you complete and sign when you apply for assistance from USDA.

Objectives:

- Reduce soil loss due to wind and water erosion
- Protect the Nation's long-term capability to produce food and fiber
- Reduce sedimentation and improve water quality
- Assist in preserving the functions and values of the Nation's wetlands

If you don't comply with these requirements for the term of your USDA contract, you risk losing your program payments.

Before making any changes on your land, you must call the Farm Service Agency (FSA). They will ask you to file an updated form AD-1026 and review your planned work with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Do you have Highly Erodible Land?

Fields designated as Highly Erodible Land (HEL) must be protected from excessive soil erosion when used to produce agricultural commodities by applying an approved conservation system. An agricultural commodity is defined as any annually tilled crop, such as corn.

NRCS will make an HEL determination when we receive your AD-1026 form from FSA. A field will be considered highly erodible if either one-third or more of the field is highly erodible, or if the highly erodible land in the field totals 50 acres or more.

Do you have wetlands?

All program participants must certify that crops have not been planted on land that was converted from a wetland to cropland or that a wetland was not converted and production of a crop is now possible.

NRCS will make a wetlands determination when we receive your AD-1026 form from FSA. Wetlands are lands with all three of the following characteristics:

1. predominance of hydric soil
2. supportive of wetland plants
3. possessing wetland hydrology

Note: this fact sheet is not applicable to crop insurance-only participants.