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| US Department of Agriculture |
| **Georgia State USDA Newsletter**  -  February 2023 |
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| [**Farm Service Agency**](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ffsa.usda.gov%2F%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=05%7C01%7C%7C5a76d3286e22471c793908db199af747%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C638131925939858619%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=F3ix4bxDFV4EF1MxbDWeX%2BYi5kV43BvSGbBQMC0Gpg4%3D&reserved=0)**|**[**Natural Resources Conservation Service**](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nrcs.usda.gov%2F%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=05%7C01%7C%7C5a76d3286e22471c793908db199af747%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C638131925939858619%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=urmP65nlP9f7JtgKr%2BZPHI2%2FhM%2FIrd2stvwmVMD%2BkvM%3D&reserved=0)**|**[**Risk Management Agency**](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Frma.usda.gov%2F%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=05%7C01%7C%7C5a76d3286e22471c793908db199af747%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C638131925939858619%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=gMBsNC5JdUlYgry88KbIMpvpwP0Fjzy%2Fisj8i%2FWoEH4%3D&reserved=0) |
| In This Issue:  * [Before You Break Out New Ground, Ensure Your Farm Meets Conservation Compliance](#link_4) * [USDA Announces General Conservation Reserve Program Signups for 2023](#link_1) * [USDA Announces Signup for Crop and Revenue Loss Assistance for Agricultural Producers](#link_3) * [USDA Announces Signup for Pandemic Assistance Revenue Program](#link_5) * [Farmers Can Now Make 2023 Crop Year Elections, Enroll in Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage Programs](#link_9) * [Not Enough Cashflow To Make Your Next Direct Loan Payment? New Tool Allows Earlier Intervention Before Delinquency](#link_6) * [USDA-NRCS In Georgia Announces Conservation Stewardship Program Sign-up for Classic and Inflation Reduction Act Funding](#link_12) * [USDA-NRCS In Georgia Announces Sign-up for Inflation Reduction Act Funded Conservation Practices](#link_8) * [Biden-Harris Administration Announces Availability of Inflation Reduction Act Funding for Climate-Smart Agriculture Nationwide](#link_11) * [USDA Expands Hurricane Insurance Protection to Include Certain Tropical Storms](#link_7) * [USDA Invests $2 Million to Provide Risk Management Training to Farmers, Ranchers](#link_10)  Before You Break Out New Ground, Ensure Your Farm Meets Conservation Compliance  |  | | --- | | The term “sodbusting” is used to identify the conversion of land from native vegetation to commodity crop production after December 23, 1985.  As part of the conservation provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985, if you’re proposing to produce agricultural commodities (crops that require annual tillage including one pass planting operations and sugar cane) on land that has been determined highly erodible and that has no crop history prior to December 23, 1985, that land must be farmed in accordance with a conservation plan or system that ensures no substantial increase in soil erosion.  Eligibility for many USDA programs requires compliance with a conservation plan or system on highly erodible land (HEL) used for the production of agricultural commodities. This includes Farm Service Agency (FSA) loan, disaster assistance, safety net, price support, and conservation programs; Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) conservation programs; and Risk Management Agency (RMA) Federal crop insurance.  Before you clear or prepare areas not presently under production for crops that require annual tillage, you are required to file Form AD-1026 “Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation Certification,” with FSA indicating the area to be brought into production. The notification will be referred to NRCS to determine if the field is considered highly erodible land. If the field is considered HEL, you are required to implement a conservation plan or system that limits the erosion to the tolerable soil loss (T) for the predominant HEL soil on those fields.  In addition, prior to removing trees or conducting any other land manipulations that may affect wetlands, remember to update form AD-1026, to ensure you remain in compliance with the wetland conservation provisions.  Prior to purchasing or renting new cropland acres, it is recommended that you check with your local USDA Service Center to ensure your activities will be in compliance with the highly erodible land and wetland conservation provisions.  For additional information on highly erodible land conservation and wetland conservation compliance, contact [your local USDA Service Center](https://www.farmers.gov/working-with-us/service-center-locator?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery). |  FSA ARTICLESUSDA Announces General Conservation Reserve Program Signups for 2023  |  | | --- | | CRP_WeedAgriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that agricultural producers and private landowners can begin applying for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) General signup starting **February 27 through April 7, 2023.** CRP is a cornerstone voluntary conservation program offered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and a key tool in the Biden-Harris administration’s effort to address climate change and help agricultural communities invest in the long-term well-being of their land and natural resources.  Producers and landowners enrolled more than 5 million acres into CRP through signups in 2022, building on the acceptance of more than 3.1 million acres in the [largest Grassland CRP signup in history](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2Fnews-room%2Fnews-releases%2F2022%2Fusda-accepts-more-than-3-1-million-acres-in-grassland-crp-signup%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=05%7C01%7C%7C5a76d3286e22471c793908db199af747%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C638131925940327900%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=1bXMG%2FGV8cy0aucEoC9YTeGkAJCTxkrEDJXaCjdnbfo%3D&reserved=0). There are currently 23 million acres enrolled in CRP, with 1.9 million set to expire this year. USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) is aiming to reach the 27-million-acre cap statutorily set for fiscal year 2023.  **General CRP**  General CRP helps producers and landowners establish long-term, resource-conserving plant species, such as approved grasses or trees, to control soil erosion, improve water quality and enhance wildlife habitat on cropland. Additionally, General CRP includes a Climate-Smart Practice Incentive to help increase carbon sequestration and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by helping producers and landowners establish trees and permanent grasses, enhance wildlife habitat, and restore wetlands.  **Continuous CRP**  Under Continuous CRP, producers and landowners can enroll in CRP throughout the year. Offers are automatically accepted provided the producer and land meet the eligibility requirements and the enrollment levels do not exceed the statutory cap. The Climate-Smart Practice Incentive is also available in the Continuous signup.  FSA offers several additional enrollment opportunities within Continuous CRP, including the Clean Lakes Estuaries and Rivers Initiative (CLEAR30), the State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) Initiative, the Farmable Wetlands Program (FWP), and the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). The CLEAR30 Initiative, which was originally piloted in twelve states in the Great Lakes and Chesapeake Bay watershed, has been expanded nationwide, allowing producers and landowners to enroll in 30-year CRP contracts for water quality practices. Under this administration, FSA also moved SAFE practices back to the Continuous CRP signup, giving producers and landowners more opportunities to participate in the initiative. Through the FWP, producers and landowners can enroll land in CRP as part of their efforts to restore previously farmed wetlands and wetland buffers, to improve both vegetation and water flow.  This administration has also made significant improvements to CREP, which leverages federal and non-federal funds to target specific State, regional or nationally significant conservation concerns. Specifically, USDA made significant improvements to CREP to reduce barriers and make the program more accessible to a broad range of producers and new types of partners.  These updates included flexibility for partners to provide matching funds in the form of cash, in-kind contributions, or technical assistance, along with an investment in additional staff to work directly with partners. Through CREP, for the first time ever, three Tribal Nations are now partnering with USDA to help conserve, maintain, and improve grassland productivity, reduce soil erosion, and enhance wildlife habitat.  **Grassland CRP**  FSA will announce the dates for Grassland CRP signup in the coming weeks. Grassland CRP is a working lands program, helping landowners and operators protect grassland, including rangeland and pastureland and certain other lands, while maintaining the areas as working grazing lands.  Protecting grasslands contributes positively to the economy of many regions, provides biodiversity of plant and animal populations, and provides important carbon sequestration benefits to deliver lasting climate outcomes.  **How to Sign Up**  Landowners and producers interested in CRP should contact their local [USDA Service Center](https://www.farmers.gov/working-with-us/service-center-locator?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery) to learn more or to apply for the program before their deadlines.  Producers with expiring CRP acres can use the Transition Incentives Program (TIP), which incentivizes producers who sell or enter a long-term lease with a beginning, veteran, or socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher who plans to sustainably farm or ranch the land.  **More Information**  Signed into law in 1985, CRP is one of the largest voluntary private-lands conservation programs in the United States. It was originally intended to primarily control soil erosion and potentially stabilize commodity prices by taking marginal lands out of production. The program has evolved over the years, providing many conservation and economic benefits. |  USDA Announces Signup for Crop and Revenue Loss Assistance for Agricultural Producers  |  | | --- | | ERP BlueberriesSignup begins January 23 for additional emergency relief from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) through the [Emergency Relief Program](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2Fprograms-and-services%2Femergency-relief%2Findex%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=05%7C01%7C%7C5a76d3286e22471c793908db199af747%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C638131925940327900%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=gB93cKGnFdup7g1XIIqMEiQziWkDciTcFU0LaSF6SVU%3D&reserved=0) (ERP) Phase Two.  To be eligible for Phase Two, producers must have suffered a decrease in allowable gross revenue in 2020 or 2021 due to necessary expenses related to losses of eligible crops from a qualifying natural disaster event. Eligible crops include both traditional insurable commodities and specialty crops that are produced in the United States as part of a farming operation and are intended to be commercially marketed. This also includes losses of eligible on-farm stored commodities. ERP Phase 2 applicants will use the following tax years when selecting allowable gross revenue:   * Benchmark years: 2018 and/or 2019; estimated for new producers with no 2018 or 2019 revenue or adjusted if the benchmark years are not representative of the disaster year due to a change in operation size. * Disaster years: 2020 and/or 2021. The allowable gross revenue for the specific disaster year will be based on the tax year applicable to that revenue (2020, 2021 or 2022).   The ERP tool assists producers in calculating allowable gross revenue, as well as adjusted revenue for the benchmark years 2018 and 2019, and allowable gross revenue for representative tax years 2020-2022 which represent disaster years 2020 and 2021. Once producers complete the allowable gross revenue entries, they are able to print forms FSA-521 and FSA-521A through this tool.  The ERP Phase 2 and PARP application period is open from January 23 through June 2 2023.  For more information on payment calculations, payment limitations or how to determine allowable gross revenue, please reference the [ERP Phase 2 fact sheet.](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2FAssets%2FUSDA-FSA-Public%2Fusdafiles%2FFactSheets%2F2023%2Ffsa_erp_factsheet_22_update_011823.pdf%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=05%7C01%7C%7C5a76d3286e22471c793908db199af747%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C638131925940327900%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=yG8bVm6idtf%2BYTtjdErYhzj7tr6CqYeZI0eg6huS00k%3D&reserved=0) |  USDA Announces Signup for Pandemic Assistance Revenue Program The Pandemic Assistance Revenue Program (PARP) will assist eligible producers of agricultural commodities who experienced revenue decreases in calendar year 2020 compared to 2018 or 2019 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. PARP will help address gaps in previous pandemic assistance, which was targeted at price loss or lack of market access, rather than overall revenue losses.  USDA's Farm Service Agency will accept PARP applications from January 23, 2023, through June 2, 2023.  **Eligible and Ineligible Commodities**  For PARP, eligible agricultural commodities include crops, aquaculture, livestock, livestock byproducts, or other animals or animal byproducts that are produced as part of a farming operation and are intended to be commercially marketed. This includes only commodities produced in the United States or those produced outside the United States by a producer located in the United States and marketed inside the United States.  The following commodities **are not eligible** for PARP:   * Wild free-roaming animals. * Horses and other animals used or intended to be used for racing or wagering. * Aquatic species that do not meet the definition of aquaculture. * Cannabis sativa L. and any part of that plant that does not meet the definition of hemp. * Timber.   **Program Eligibility**  PARP payments will be made on a whole-farm basis, not commodity-by-commodity. To be eligible for PARP, an agricultural producer must have been in the business of farming during at least part of the 2020 calendar year and must have experienced a 15 percent decrease in allowable gross revenue in 2020, as compared to either:   * The 2018 or 2019 **calendar year**, as elected by the producer, if they received allowable gross revenue during the 2018 or 2019 **calendar years**, or * The producer’s expected 2020 calendar year allowable gross revenue, if the producer had no allowable gross revenue in 2018 or 2019.   PARP payments will be issued after the application period ends on June 2, 2023.  For more information on determining allowable gross revenue visit [farmers.gov/coronavirus/pandemic-assistance/parp](https://www.farmers.gov/coronavirus/pandemic-assistance/parp?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery) or review the [PARP fact sheet](https://www.farmers.gov/sites/default/files/documents/farmersgov-parp-factsheet.pdf?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery).  **More Information**  To apply for PARP, contact your [local USDA Service Center](https://www.farmers.gov/service-center-locator?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery). Farmers Can Now Make 2023 Crop Year Elections, Enroll in Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage Programs Agricultural producers can now change election and enroll in the [Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2Fprograms-and-services%2Farcplc_program%2Findex%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=05%7C01%7C%7C5a76d3286e22471c793908db199af747%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C638131925940483490%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=ztmQt9zHEF41Gd82YFC5SJjP4AMWYXrhKc0zwwdEJbg%3D&reserved=0) programs for the 2023 crop year, two key safety net programs offered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Signup began Oct. 17, 2022, and producers have until March 15, 2023, to enroll in these two programs. Additionally, USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) has started issuing payments totaling more than $255 million to producers with 2021 crops that have triggered payments through ARC or PLC.  **2023 Elections and Enrollment**  Producers can elect coverage and enroll in ARC-County (ARC-CO) or PLC, which provide crop-by-crop protection, or ARC-Individual (ARC-IC), which protects the entire farm. Although election changes for 2023 are optional, producers must enroll through a signed contract each year. Also, if a producer has a multi-year contract on the farm and makes an election change for 2023, they must sign a new contract.  If producers do not submit their election by the March 15, 2023 deadline, their election remains the same as their 2022 election for crops on the farm.  Farm owners cannot enroll in either program unless they have a share interest in the farm.  Covered commodities include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium and short grain rice, safflower seed, seed cotton, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat.  **Web-Based Decision Tools**  In partnership with USDA, the University of Illinois and Texas A&M University offer web-based decision tools to assist producers in making informed, educated decisions using crop data specific to their respective farming operations. Tools include:   * [Gardner-farmdoc Payment Calculator,](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ffarmdocdaily.illinois.edu%2F2019%2F08%2Fintroducing-the-gardner-farmdoc-payment-calculator.html%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=05%7C01%7C%7C5a76d3286e22471c793908db199af747%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C638131925940483490%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=k1JZvm8T9X%2FrjtpktE5N3PtCuIIq2YWIQnRtd1x8pqg%3D&reserved=0) a tool available through the University of Illinois allows producers to estimate payments for farms and counties for ARC-CO and PLC. * [ARC and PLC Decision Tool,](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.afpc.tamu.edu%2F%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=05%7C01%7C%7C5a76d3286e22471c793908db199af747%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C638131925940483490%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=l%2B4MPJo2dEoyMn9oyOTnAmIzp7sXMcj4qhFLJd%2BHYq8%3D&reserved=0) a tool available through Texas A&M that allows producers to obtain basic information regarding the decision and factors that should be taken into consideration such as future commodity prices and historic yields to estimate payments for 2022.   **2021 Payments and Contracts**  ARC and PLC payments for a given crop year are paid out the following fall to allow actual county yields and the Market Year Average prices to be finalized. This month, FSA processed payments to producers enrolled in 2021 ARC-CO, ARC-IC and PLC for covered commodities that triggered for the crop year.  For ARC-CO, producers can view the [2021](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fview.officeapps.live.com%2Fop%2Fview.aspx%3Fsrc%3Dhttps%253A%252F%252Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%252FAssets%252FUSDA-FSA-Public%252Fusdafiles%252Farc-plc%252F2021%252Fexcel%252Farcco_2021_data.xlsx%253Futm_medium%253Demail%2526utm_source%253Dgovdelivery%26utm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery%26wdOrigin%3DBROWSELINK&data=05%7C01%7C%7C5a76d3286e22471c793908db199af747%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C638131925940483490%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=Vr5o2COoyNjRvw2K4XB0R6F1nghkhRzYKxVqxjof5gs%3D&reserved=0) ARC-CO Benchmark Yields and Revenues online database, for payment rates applicable to their county and each covered commodity. For PLC, payments have triggered for rapeseed and peanuts.  For ARC-IC, producers should contact their local FSA office for additional information pertaining to 2021 payment information, which relies on producer-specific yields for the crop and farm to determine benchmark yields and actual year yields when calculating revenues.  **By the Numbers**  In 2021, producers signed nearly 1.8 million ARC or PLC contracts, and 251 million out of 273 million base acres were enrolled in the programs.  For the 2022 crop year signed contracts surpassed 1.8 million, to be paid in the fall of 2023, if a payment triggers.  Since ARC and PLC were first authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill and reauthorized by the 2018 Farm Bill, these safety-net programs have paid out more than $34.9 billion to producers of covered commodities.  **Crop Insurance Considerations**  ARC and PLC are part of a broader safety net provided by USDA, which also includes crop insurance and marketing assistance loans.  Producers are reminded that ARC and PLC elections and enrollments can impact eligibility for some crop insurance products.  Producers on farms with a PLC election have the option of purchasing Supplemental Coverage Option (SCO) through their Approved Insurance Provider; however, producers on farms where ARC is the election are ineligible for SCO on their planted acres for that crop on that farm.  Unlike SCO, the Enhanced Coverage Option (ECO) is unaffected by an ARC election.  Producers may add ECO regardless of the farm program election.  Upland cotton farmers who choose to enroll seed cotton base acres in ARC or PLC are ineligible for the stacked income protection plan (STAX) on their planted cotton acres for that farm.  **More Information**  For more information on ARC and PLC, visit the [ARC and PLC webpage](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2Fprograms-and-services%2Farcplc_program%2Findex%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=05%7C01%7C%7C5a76d3286e22471c793908db199af747%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C638131925940483490%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=ztmQt9zHEF41Gd82YFC5SJjP4AMWYXrhKc0zwwdEJbg%3D&reserved=0) or contact your local [USDA Service Center](http://www.farmers.gov/service-center-locator?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery). Not Enough Cashflow to Make Your Next Direct Loan Payment? New Tool Allows Earlier Intervention Before Delinquency On October 18, 2022, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced that distressed borrowers with qualifying USDA farm loans had already received nearly $800 million in assistance, as part of the  $3.1 billion in assistance for distressed farm loan borrowers provided through Section 22006 of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). The IRA directed USDA to expedite assistance to distressed borrowers with direct or guaranteed loans administered by USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) whose operations face financial risk.  These initial steps were focused on approximately 11,000 delinquent direct and guaranteed borrowers and approximately 2,100 borrowers who had their farms foreclosed on and still had remaining debt. These borrowers have either had their accounts brought current or they have had their debts resolved. For delinquent direct loan borrowers, USDA also paid their next scheduled annual installment to give them peace of mind in the near term. About 1,600 complex cases, including the cases of borrowers in foreclosure or bankruptcy, are being assessed on a case-by-case basis; borrowers in these situations will be receiving a separate letter describing their IRA payment assistance.  The October 2022 announcement kicked off a process to provide assistance to distressed farm loan borrowers using several complementary approaches, with the goal of keeping you farming and improving the way that USDA approaches borrowing and servicing. Through this assistance, USDA is focused on generating long-term stability and success for distressed borrowers.  Now, with many of these initial payments made or in progress, USDA is announcing details on a NEW TOOL to enable FSA to intervene more quickly and provide one-time financial assistance to borrowers before they become delinquent, or to those borrowers who have recently become delinquent. The new process will add an option to use the existing direct loan servicing criteria to review, upon request, a borrower's cashflow to determine eligibility for assistance to pay the next installment or a recently missed installment.  Specifically, FSA is now offering new assistance to Farm Loan Program (FLP) direct loan borrowers with certain FLP loans who can demonstrate they are (or were) unable to develop a feasible plan for the current production cycle. These borrowers, known as “financially distressed borrowers” under existing FSA regulations, lack sufficient cashflow in their operating plans to make their most recently due or next loan installment payment when considering all operating costs, family living expenses, and debt repayments for the current production cycle.  If you are a direct borrower of a qualifying loan within 60 days of your due date or have already missed a recent installment payment due since August 1, 2022, you can request a cashflow analysis from FSA. If FSA determines that you qualify for assistance as a financially distressed borrower, FSA will make a one-time payment covering your installment and any additional interest or other costs necessary to make the loan current, using assistance provided under Section 22006 of the IRA. While this new tool may be extended in some form, it is currently limited to installments due August 1, 2022, through September 30, 2023, and should be requested by December 31, 2023. The cash flow analysis will consider the borrower’s financial status as of the date the installment was due regardless of when the application is received. Qualifying loan types are: Farm Ownership, Operating (including Youth and Microloans), Emergency, Conservation, and Soil and Water loans.  If you are interested in this new tool, you should contact your local farm loan officer or the FSA call center and make a request for a review of your cashflow when you are within 60 days of the installment due date (or missed a recent installment/payment) if you believe you may qualify for assistance. FSA will use its existing procedures to review your current financial statement and farm operating plan, including the projected cash flow budget reflecting production, income, expenses, and payment plan for non-FLP debt, to determine if you qualify as financially distressed. Depending on what documents are already on file with FSA, FSA may need to request additional documents or information from you that are necessary to conduct a cash flow review under FSA’s existing procedures. The requested documents must be provided to FSA in order for FSA to determine if you qualify for assistance. You may also contact the FSA call center at 877-508-8364 between 8 a.m. and 7 p.m. Eastern for general questions, for assistance in contacting your local FSA office or to request an alternative accommodation.  Similar to other USDA assistance, these payments will be reported as income and borrowers are encouraged to consult their tax advisors. USDA also has resources and partnerships with cooperators who can provide additional assistance and help borrowers navigate the process. USDA has tax-related resources available at [Taxes and USDA Programs | Farmers.gov](https://www.farmers.gov/working-with-us/taxes).  The announcements in October 2022 and this new tool are only the first steps in USDA’s efforts to provide assistance to distressed farm loan borrowers and improve the loan servicing efforts at USDA by adding more tools and flexibilities. Additional announcements and investments in assistance will be made as USDA institutes these additional changes and improvements. NRCS ARTICLESUSDA-NRCS In Georgia Announces Conservation Stewardship Program Sign-up for Classic and Inflation Reduction Act Funding The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Georgia is announcing a [Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDEsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMzAyMjcuNzIzMzkzNzEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwczovL3d3dy5ucmNzLnVzZGEuZ292L3Byb2dyYW1zLWluaXRpYXRpdmVzL2NzcC1jb25zZXJ2YXRpb24tc3Rld2FyZHNoaXAtcHJvZ3JhbS9nZW9yZ2lhL2NvbnNlcnZhdGlvbi1zdGV3YXJkc2hpcC1wcm9ncmFtP3V0bV9tZWRpdW09ZW1haWwmdXRtX3NvdXJjZT1nb3ZkZWxpdmVyeSJ9.Nw8jkyF-1vqHpibh6vO4t2-nw4Py6fO0de-0MTZpsOA/s/1047342200/br/155181835275-l?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery) sign-up today. Agricultural producers and forest landowners looking to build on previous conservation efforts and building climate resiliency should consider one of two funding opportunities available to them this year and apply by March 31.  This year, NRCS will offer the statewide Classic CSP sign-up option for all producers in Georgia, as well as a targeted sign-up utilizing funding from the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) that Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack [announced recently](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDIsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMzAyMjcuNzIzMzkzNzEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwczovL3d3dy5ucmNzLnVzZGEuZ292L25ld3MvYmlkZW4taGFycmlzLWFkbWluaXN0cmF0aW9uLWFubm91bmNlcy1hdmFpbGFiaWxpdHktb2YtaW5mbGF0aW9uLXJlZHVjdGlvbi1hY3QtZnVuZGluZy1mb3I_dXRtX21lZGl1bT1lbWFpbCZ1dG1fc291cmNlPWdvdmRlbGl2ZXJ5In0.s_Dpr0EnFtbupHVy2801btHv747if1_GBr1H337Ywjc/s/1047342200/br/155181835275-l?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery).  “The Conservation Stewardship Program continues to help our customers take conservation to the next level,” said Terrance O. Rudolph, state conservationist for NRCS in Georgia. “This sign-up, including the IRA funding will help even more agricultural producers and forest landowners build a more climate resilient Georgia.”  **CSP-Classic**  NRCS offers CSP in all 50 states, as well as the Pacific and Caribbean areas through continuous sign-ups. The program provides many benefits, including increased crop yields, decreased inputs, wildlife habitat improvements and increased resilience to adverse weather. CSP is for working lands, including cropland, pastureland, rangeland, nonindustrial private forest land and agricultural land under Indian tribe jurisdiction.  Special provisions are available for [historically underserved producers](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDMsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMzAyMjcuNzIzMzkzNzEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwczovL3d3dy5ucmNzLnVzZGEuZ292L2dldHRpbmctYXNzaXN0YW5jZS91bmRlcnNlcnZlZC1mYXJtZXJzLXJhbmNoZXJzP3V0bV9tZWRpdW09ZW1haWwmdXRtX3NvdXJjZT1nb3ZkZWxpdmVyeSJ9.sG10Ou5bNazENtSwR9xAy-n5YzYSDuXZ_pwIwngjBf4/s/1047342200/br/155181835275-l?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery), which include those considered beginning, socially disadvantaged and limited resource as well as military veterans. These producers have targeted funds.  Find eligible practices in Georgia and practice payment amounts [here](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDQsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMzAyMjcuNzIzMzkzNzEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwczovL3d3dy5ucmNzLnVzZGEuZ292L3NpdGVzL2RlZmF1bHQvZmlsZXMvMjAyMi0xMS9HZW9yZ2lhLUNTdHdQLTIzLXBheW1lbnQtcmF0ZXMucGRmP3V0bV9tZWRpdW09ZW1haWwmdXRtX3NvdXJjZT1nb3ZkZWxpdmVyeSJ9.XZLP5Zt0sdxkNGKsieUvya9Gd1zIKD56KU62CfXt0W8/s/1047342200/br/155181835275-l?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery). Payment rates for conservation practices are reviewed and set each fiscal year for the state.  **CSP-IRA**  For the IRA funded portion of this year’s sign-up, agricultural producers in Baker, Calhoun, Decatur, Dougherty, Early, Grady, Miller, Mitchell, and Seminole counties can apply for Soil Health focused practices and enhancements. Whereas producers and forest landowners in Bleckley, Dodge, Emmanuel, Johnson, Laurens, Montgomery, Toombs, Treutlen, Twiggs, Washington, Wheeler, and Wilkinson counties can apply for Agroforestry, Forestry and Upland Wildlife Habitat practices and enhancements.  Download the [Georgia CSP – Inflation Reduction Act Activities List](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDUsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMzAyMjcuNzIzMzkzNzEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwczovL3d3dy5ucmNzLnVzZGEuZ292L3NpdGVzL2RlZmF1bHQvZmlsZXMvMjAyMy0wMi9DU1AtSVJBJTIwR0FfQWN0aXZpdGllc18yMDIzLnBkZj91dG1fbWVkaXVtPWVtYWlsJnV0bV9zb3VyY2U9Z292ZGVsaXZlcnkifQ.ysgL06zv7fIBLkKgVNohA0NhXHlBHBvrn_Jn_1r02O4/s/1047342200/br/155181835275-l?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery) for more information.  **How to Apply**  NRCS accepts applications for conservation programs year-round, but to be included in this funding batch, interested producers should contact their [local USDA Service Center](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDYsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMzAyMjcuNzIzMzkzNzEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwczovL3d3dy5mYXJtZXJzLmdvdi9zZXJ2aWNlLWNlbnRlci1sb2NhdG9yP3V0bV9tZWRpdW09ZW1haWwmdXRtX3NvdXJjZT1nb3ZkZWxpdmVyeSJ9.vDEx84u8J4d7tf7I9zDu1EJtVsoxJBQniywPXuWD1hg/s/1047342200/br/155181835275-l?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery) and **apply by March 31, 2023.** Additional sign-up batches may be announced later, subject to the availability of funding.  **More Information**  On Nov. 21, 2022, USDA published a Federal Register Notice requesting public input on implementation of the funding provided by the IRA and sought comments on program delivery and outreach, especially for underserved producers. That notice closed on Dec. 21, 2022, and NRCS received over 450 comments from the public, which the agency is using to guide actions in fiscal year 2023 and will continue to identify and adopt additional changes based on that public feedback in fiscal year 2024 and in future years.  On Aug. 16, 2022, President Biden signed the IRA into law. It is a historic, once-in-a-generation investment and opportunity for the agricultural communities that USDA serves. The IRA will help producers stay on the farm, prevent producers from becoming ineligible for future assistance and promote climate-smart agriculture by increasing access to conservation assistance.  USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. Under the Biden-Harris administration, USDA is transforming America’s food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit [www.usda.gov](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDcsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMzAyMjcuNzIzMzkzNzEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwczovL3d3dy51c2RhLmdvdi8_dXRtX21lZGl1bT1lbWFpbCZ1dG1fc291cmNlPWdvdmRlbGl2ZXJ5In0.QR5ehkQjneHkuqse1Vv9F_s3O0Z_hcXG4gNRhdPsCeY/s/1047342200/br/155181835275-l?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery).  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ USDA-NRCS In Georgia Announces Sign-up for Inflation Reduction Act Funded Conservation Practices The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Georgia is conducting another [Environmental Quality Incentives Program’s (EQIP)](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDEsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMzAyMjEuNzE5Njk3MzEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwczovL3d3dy5ucmNzLnVzZGEuZ292L3Byb2dyYW1zLWluaXRpYXRpdmVzL2VxaXAtZW52aXJvbm1lbnRhbC1xdWFsaXR5LWluY2VudGl2ZXMvZ2VvcmdpYS9lbnZpcm9ubWVudGFsLXF1YWxpdHktaW5jZW50aXZlcz91dG1fbWVkaXVtPWVtYWlsJnV0bV9zb3VyY2U9Z292ZGVsaXZlcnkifQ.74DWVQOBW8lNvnP4-L1rIJFGJvLoCq-nLr_oN0n0GUE/s/1911530333/br/154830808934-l?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery) sign-up utilizing funding from the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) that Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack [announced recently](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDIsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMzAyMjEuNzE5Njk3MzEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwczovL3d3dy5ucmNzLnVzZGEuZ292L25ld3MvYmlkZW4taGFycmlzLWFkbWluaXN0cmF0aW9uLWFubm91bmNlcy1hdmFpbGFiaWxpdHktb2YtaW5mbGF0aW9uLXJlZHVjdGlvbi1hY3QtZnVuZGluZy1mb3I_dXRtX21lZGl1bT1lbWFpbCZ1dG1fc291cmNlPWdvdmRlbGl2ZXJ5In0.OgPHPnjuhGLeKFS7dU7x0dUw9CkKCEpVQ4Aek_TiVkY/s/1911530333/br/154830808934-l?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery).  This statewide sign-up will take two approaches to assist producers who plan to build climate resiliency into their operations. First, those applying for cover crops (Practice Code 340) will be administered through the ACT NOW approach, which is a targeted, rapid, and streamlined application and contract approval process.  While this sign-up concludes on March 24, 2023, through the ACT NOW streamlined application and contract approval approach, cover crop applications will be assessed and ranked as they are submitted to the [USDA Field Service Center](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDMsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMzAyMjEuNzE5Njk3MzEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwczovL3d3dy5mYXJtZXJzLmdvdi93b3JraW5nLXdpdGgtdXMvc2VydmljZS1jZW50ZXItbG9jYXRvcj91dG1fbWVkaXVtPWVtYWlsJnV0bV9zb3VyY2U9Z292ZGVsaXZlcnkifQ.q-H-FuWEbACyPqbNJu1ux_815lpFkyRWTgHO1wnU1Ms/s/1911530333/br/154830808934-l?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery). Based on funds availability, application assessments with a ranking score of 67 points or greater will be preapproved immediately for the first batch of funding. Producers are encouraged to apply for the program at their earliest convenience.  Secondly, those applying for energy conservation related practices will be administered through the normal batching and ranking process. The energy-specific practices included in this sign-up are as follows:   * Combustion System Improvement (Practice Code 372) * Energy Efficient Agricultural Operation (Practice Code 374) * Energy Efficient Lighting System (Practice Code 670) * Energy Efficient Building Envelope (Practice Code 672)   “This sign-up will provide our customers another opportunity to make climate related investments in their farms and our communities.” said Terrance O. Rudolph, NRCS state conservationist in Georgia.  **How to Apply**  NRCS accepts applications for conservation programs year-round, but to be included in this funding batch, interested producers should contact their [local USDA Service Center](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDQsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMzAyMjEuNzE5Njk3MzEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwczovL3d3dy5mYXJtZXJzLmdvdi9zZXJ2aWNlLWNlbnRlci1sb2NhdG9yP3V0bV9tZWRpdW09ZW1haWwmdXRtX3NvdXJjZT1nb3ZkZWxpdmVyeSJ9.iVcyDEIgRT8A-IfhjCF_esWwH6QYIoc_P5tCeUwBNQ4/s/1911530333/br/154830808934-l?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery) and **apply by March 24, 2023.** Additional sign-up batches may be announced at a later date, subject to the availability of funding.  **More Information**  On Nov. 21, 2022, USDA published a Federal Register Notice requesting public input on implementation of the funding provided by the IRA and sought comments on program delivery and outreach, especially for underserved producers. 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To learn more, visit [www.usda.gov.](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDUsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMzAyMjEuNzE5Njk3MzEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwczovL3d3dy51c2RhLmdvdi8_dXRtX21lZGl1bT1lbWFpbCZ1dG1fc291cmNlPWdvdmRlbGl2ZXJ5In0.xbQ6I0Not1NfBGWsJkH8ycCuAsx1XFfM9OINkn5Tfms/s/1911530333/br/154830808934-l?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery) Biden-Harris Administration Announces Availability of Inflation Reduction Act Funding for Climate-Smart Agriculture Nationwide Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is making funding available for agricultural producers and forest landowners nationwide to participate in voluntary conservation programs and adopt climate-smart practices. The [Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nrcs.usda.gov%2Fabout%2Fpriorities%2Finflation-reduction-act%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=05%7C01%7C%7C5a76d3286e22471c793908db199af747%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C638131925940483490%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=RiWi1lBxMqP0GeW7gIKLtJTCkmeMChDPCbRGqaIrAWs%3D&reserved=0) provided an additional $19.5 billion over five years for climate smart agriculture through several of the conservation programs that USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) implements. NRCS is making available $850 million in fiscal year 2023 for its oversubscribed conservation programs: the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) and Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). [Read more](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nrcs.usda.gov%2Fnews%2Fbiden-harris-administration-announces-availability-of-inflation-reduction-act-funding-for%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=05%7C01%7C%7C5a76d3286e22471c793908db199af747%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C638131925940483490%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=RICyjUtAvBEduF7fDXPLyr4O2igAdgeobB5EAN9E1aA%3D&reserved=0) RMA ARTICLESUSDA Expands Hurricane Insurance Protection to Include Certain Tropical Storms Farmers may now be eligible for further protection against damaging tropical storms. After hearing directly from agricultural producers, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is expanding its Hurricane Insurance Protection- Wind Index (HIP-WI) Endorsement with a Tropical Storm Option. USDA’s Risk Management Agency (RMA) will offer this option for the 2023 crop year.  “During the past few years, many farmers have felt the impacts of tropical activity, and it’s important that we offer risk management tools to protect agricultural producers and their operations,” said [RMA Administrator Marcia Bunger.](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.rma.usda.gov%2FAbout-RMA%2FWho-We-Are%2FMarcia-Bunger%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=05%7C01%7C%7C5a76d3286e22471c793908db199af747%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C638131925940483490%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=iEBXwmu9CpKmQvZYFM5atipx7iUxYAdkxz8jLxROl7A%3D&reserved=0) “Adding this Tropical Storm Option is in response to feedback from our customers.”  [HIP-WI](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Frma.usda.gov%2FTopics%2FHurricane-Insurance-Protection-Wind-Index%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=05%7C01%7C%7C5a76d3286e22471c793908db199af747%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C638131925940483490%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=yUA5znEdpITFJe5XD3Ut8M1Vi7TWzTW61As7DYLAreo%3D&reserved=0) was first available for purchase for the 2020 hurricane season and covers a portion of the deductible of the underlying crop insurance policy when the county, or an adjacent one, is hit with sustained hurricane-force winds from a named hurricane based on data from the National Hurricane Center at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).  RMA has now added the Tropical Storm Option to this endorsement for damage caused by strong weather systems not categorized as hurricanes. The option would cover named tropical storms, as reported by NOAA with maximum sustained winds exceeding 34 knots and precipitation exceeding six inches over a four-day period. Both the wind trigger and precipitation trigger must occur for an indemnity to be paid.  The HIP-WI endorsement, including the new Tropical Storm Option, are available in [select counties](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.rma.usda.gov%2FTopics%2FHurricane-Insurance-Protection-Wind-Index%2FHIP-WI-and-Tropical-Storm-Option%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=05%7C01%7C%7C5a76d3286e22471c793908db199af747%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C638131925940483490%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=IrSAgVaB5LYJo7sD2ElO9P79V7%2FymVDAvwN7TVogAxM%3D&reserved=0) in Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Vermont, and Virginia.  During the past three years, HIP-WI has been a successful risk management tool for many in effected areas, with nearly $550 million paid in indemnities to date. As an example, 2022’s Hurricane Ian resulted in almost $300 million in indemnity of which about $260 million is attributed to HIP-WI. More Information Crop insurance is sold and delivered solely through private crop insurance agents. A list of crop insurance agents is available at all USDA Service Centers and online at the [RMA](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Frma.usda.gov%2Fen%2FInformation-Tools%2FAgent-Locator%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=05%7C01%7C%7C5a76d3286e22471c793908db199af747%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C638131925940483490%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=xI%2F0W2FnDpAJhViC%2BsmkRGBvnkMZojXXWVt6TOsiCKQ%3D&reserved=0) [Agent Locator.](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Frma.usda.gov%2Fen%2FInformation-Tools%2FAgent-Locator%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=05%7C01%7C%7C5a76d3286e22471c793908db199af747%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C638131925940483490%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=xI%2F0W2FnDpAJhViC%2BsmkRGBvnkMZojXXWVt6TOsiCKQ%3D&reserved=0) Learn more about crop insurance and the modern farm safety net at [rma.usda.gov](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Frma.usda.gov%2F%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=05%7C01%7C%7C5a76d3286e22471c793908db199af747%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C638131925940483490%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=2eUYKvCum%2B7YRZLneO8woTcEu2QzpaQ9AOOS%2F7%2FPL4U%3D&reserved=0) or by contacting your [RMA Regional Office.](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.rma.usda.gov%2FRMALocal%2FField-Offices%2FRegional-Offices%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=05%7C01%7C%7C5a76d3286e22471c793908db199af747%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C638131925940483490%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=agPRgHTwOUtkIf%2FGm%2FsEzi9KYzk8RZZk33Oi2VJkbkk%3D&reserved=0)  USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In the Biden-Harris administration, USDA is transforming America’s food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit [www.usda.gov.](http://www.usda.gov/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery) USDA Invests $2 Million to Provide Risk Management Training to Farmers, Ranchers The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced up to $2 million is available for cooperative agreements for risk management education and training programs that support farmers and ranchers, including underserved producers, small-scale farmers, organic operations and climate-smart farm practices.  USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) makes this funding available to provide the needed resources for organizations - such as universities, county cooperative extension offices, and nonprofit organizations - to develop education tools that help producers learn how to effectively manage long-term risks and challenges.  "Agriculture is an inherently risky line of work, so we are partnering with organizations to provide valuable training, particularly in underserved communities, so that they learn how to effectively manage risks with their businesses," said RMA Administrator Marcia Bunger. "We're committed to broadening the reach of crop insurance and these risk management education partnerships are a testament to our efforts to reach more communities."  A broad range of risk management training activities are eligible for funding consideration, including training on crop insurance options, record keeping, financial management, non-insurance-based risk management tools and natural disaster preparedness among others. Partners can also train farmers at all levels on risk management options that help secure local food systems.  Proposals are due April 24, 2023. The notice of funding has additional details [View Opportunity |GRANTS.GOV.](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.grants.gov%2Fweb%2Fgrants%2Fview-opportunity.html%3FoppId%3D346284%26utm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=05%7C01%7C%7C5a76d3286e22471c793908db199af747%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C638131925940483490%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=zxIwaQh4VZ1zYip%2FNXYJ7SCmCA%2FzFtioxXM3CMrC3lE%3D&reserved=0)  Interested organizations must apply through the Results Verification System at [http://rvs.umn.edu.](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Frvs.umn.edu%2F%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=05%7C01%7C%7C5a76d3286e22471c793908db199af747%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C638131925940483490%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=UaTHc0zzh4yrovOs%2FDoerJfgmPXkVRjx3BC0JkJqt8w%3D&reserved=0) (https://rvs.umn.edu/Home.aspx) (https://rvs.umn.edu/Home.aspx)  (https://rvs.umn.edu/Home.aspx) In the past two years, RMA has invested roughly $6.5 million into risk management education and outreach partnerships.  Examples of previous RME education partnership projects include:   * Invested $200,000 to assist the Rural South Institute deliver financial and risk management education to minority producers underserved by crop insurance in 18 persistent poverty counties in Alabama, Georgia and Mississippi. * Invested $107,000 with the University of Arizona to improve risk management skills of small to medium-scale Native American livestock producers in Arizona and New Mexico.   **More Information**  RMA oversees the Federal crop insurance program and promotes a strong farm safety net to sustain and ensure the success of American agriculture. Federal crop insurance helps farmers and ranchers manage risks, such as catastrophic weather conditions and market fluctuations.  USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In the Biden-Harris administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery) (https://[www.usda.gov/)](http://www.usda.gov/)?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery) |
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| |  | | --- | |  |   Georgia State USDA Office 355 Hancock Avenue Athens, GA 30601  Phone: 706-546-2266 Fax: 855-409-5735   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **State Executive Director Farm Service Agency**  Arthur L. Tripp, Jr.: 706-546-2266 arthur.tripp@usda.gov | **State Conservationist Natural Resources Conservation Service**  Terrance O. Rudolph: 706-546-2272 terrance.rudolph@usda.gov | | **Regional Office Director Risk Management Agency**  Davina Lee: 229-242-7235 davina.lee@usda.gov |  | |  |  | |  |  |     USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users). |