



### Organic Certification Cost Share Program

#### INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP), administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA), provides organic producers and handlers with financial assistance to reduce the cost of organic certification. The program reimburses producers and handlers for a portion of their paid certification costs. Once certified, organic producers and handlers are eligible to receive reimbursement for up to 75 percent of certification costs each year, up to a maximum of \$750 per certification scope—crops, livestock, wild crops, handling and State Organic Program fees.

#### WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Certified organic producers and handlers who have paid certification fees during the 2017 or 2018 program year may apply for reimbursement of the incurred costs.

Program Year	Covers expenses paid from...	The application deadline is...*
2017	Oct. 1, 2016, through Sept. 30, 2017	Oct. 31, 2017.
2018	Oct. 1, 2017, through Sept. 30, 2018	Oct. 31, 2018.

\*OCCSP funds are limited and applications are paid on a first-come, first-served basis. Applications received after all funds are obligated will not be paid.

#### IS CERTIFICATION REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE?

Yes. Organic certification cost share funds are only available to certified organic producers and handlers. Certification must be provided by a [USDA-accredited certifying agent](#). If your operation is not currently certified organic and you would like to learn more about the certification process, please visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/organic](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/organic).

#### WHAT COSTS ARE REIMBURSABLE?

Eligible costs include application fees, inspection costs, fees related to equivalency agreement/arrangement requirements, travel/per diem for inspectors, user fees, sales assessments and postage.

#### WHAT COSTS ARE NOT REIMBURSABLE?

Ineligible costs include equipment, materials, supplies, transitional certification fees, late fees and inspections necessary to address National Organic Program regulatory violations.

#### WHAT IS THE MAXIMUM REIMBURSEMENT AMOUNT?

The maximum per certification scope (crops, livestock, wild crops, handling or State Organic Program fees) is \$750.

#### HOW DO I APPLY FOR REIMBURSEMENT?

You may apply to a participating state agency according to their deadlines, or you may apply directly to one of over 2,100 FSA offices. Applicants must typically submit a one-page application form, W-9 tax form (to participating state agencies), proof of certification and an itemized invoice of certification expenses.

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION

This fact sheet is for informational purposes only; other eligibility requirements may apply. For more information, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/organic](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/organic) or contact your local FSA office. To find your local FSA office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

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*Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.*

*To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:*

- 1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- 2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- 3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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