



# BRIDGES TO OPPORTUNITY

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
FARM SERVICE AGENCY

## FACT SHEET

January 2017

### Bridges to Opportunity

---

#### OVERVIEW

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) serves America's farmers, ranchers and anyone interested in agriculture through a network of over 2,100 offices in nearly every rural county in the United States, providing localized, in-person service to potential and current farmers and ranchers who, in turn, provide our nation and the world with safe, affordable and reliable food, fuel and fiber.

In 2014, FSA began to explore how this unique network of local offices can function as an even bigger informational gateway to connect current and future agricultural producers with more information and resources beyond those provided by USDA alone.

Today through the Bridges to Opportunity service (Bridges), FSA is working with nonfederal partners to provide farmers, ranchers and anyone interested in agriculture with information on topics ranging from organic production, beginning farmer resources, integrated pest management, disaster assistance, conservation practices, agricultural educational courses, loans, grants and other financial assistance that can benefit and grow a farming and ranching operation — helping more farmers, ranchers or anyone interested in agriculture achieve their version of the American Dream.

#### HOW BRIDGES TO OPPORTUNITY WORKS

USDA has partnered with thousands of local, state, regional and national agricultural organizations that offer programs, nongovernmental grants, technical assistance, financial advice and other information that can help current and future farmers and ranchers. For example, a farmer, rancher or someone interested in agriculture may visit an FSA county office seeking information on organic production. Using specialized software, an FSA employee now can search and obtain a list of all local, state, regional and national organizations offering resources and services on organic production. The FSA employee can email or print that information for the producer, plus contact the partner organization regarding the producer's interest. The Bridges database contains information on all subject matters that affect farmers, ranchers and anyone interested in agriculture on a wide range of topics,

including but not limited to drought relief, beginning farmer information and disaster assistance.

#### LOCATION

Bridges began as a pilot in October 2014 in five states. In April 2015, Bridges moved into Phase 2, expanding into 20 states and 202 county offices that service 318 counties. Today, Bridges is available nationwide in over 2,100 county offices across the country.

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about Bridges to Opportunity, visit the website at [www.fsa.usda.gov/bridges](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/bridges) or contact an FSA county office. To find a county office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

---

*In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.*

*Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, 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).*

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