



USDA RESOURCES
for Pennsylvania Maple Producers

Are you a maple producer? USDA's Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Risk Management Agency offer programs and services to help you fund your operation, conserve natural resources, and recover from natural disasters.

Funding Opportunities for Maple Producers

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers funding opportunities to help maple producers start, expand, and maintain their operations.

Farm Storage Facility Loans

FSA's Farm Storage Facility Loan Program (FSFL) provides low-interest financing so producers can build or upgrade facilities to store certain commodities. Maple sap and maple syrup are both eligible, and equipment and facilities such as sap tanks, certain hauling trucks, and storage space for maple syrup qualify. Eligible facilities and equipment may be new or used, permanently affixed, or portable.

The maximum loan amount for storage facilities is \$500,000 for qualifying producers. The maximum loan amount for storage and handling trucks is \$100,000. FSA also offers a microloan option for loans with a total balance up to \$50,000.



Farm Loan Programs

There are several types of farm loans available to fit your specific business needs. Loan options include:

- **Direct and Guaranteed Farm Operating Loans** can be used to purchase sap lines, collection equipment, and processing facilities, cover rental fees, and more. The maximum amount available to qualified borrowers is \$400,000 for direct loans and \$1,776,000 for guaranteed loans.



- **Direct and Guaranteed Farm Ownership Loans** can be used to purchase or expand a farming operation. This can help with buying land, paying closing costs, constructing or improving buildings on the farm, and other large expenses. The maximum amount available to qualified borrowers is \$600,000 for direct loans and \$1,776,000 for guaranteed loans.
 - **Direct Microloans** are a type of Farm Operating or Farm Ownership Loan designed to meet the needs of small and beginning farmers. These loans are for up to \$50,000, and the application process is simplified.
 - **Direct Emergency Loans** are available for existing producers who have suffered a substantial physical or production loss resulting from a declared natural disaster. This loan can be used to replace trees and equipment, cover repair costs, or provide for lost working capital. The maximum loan amount to qualified borrowers is \$500,000.
 - **Guaranteed Conservation Loans** can be used for the costs associated with implementing certain conservation activities, including purchasing specialized equipment and providing working capital to implement the conservation plan. The maximum loan amount to qualified borrowers is \$1,776,000.
 - **Direct Youth Loans** offer financing up to \$5,000 to aspiring farmers between the ages of 10 and 20, in connection with their participation in 4-H, FFA, Tribal youth groups, or other similar agricultural youth organizations. Youth loans can be used for educational agricultural projects, such as making maple syrup.
- Visit farmers.gov/fund to learn more about funding opportunities for your operation. Through our **Farm Loan Discovery Tool**, you can answer five quick questions to learn about USDA farm loans that might be right for you.
- ### Conservation Resources for Maple Producers
- USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) offers programs and services that benefit both maple producers and the environment.
- **The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)** provides financial assistance and one-on-one technical support to help maple producers address natural resource concerns through voluntary conservation practices. Multiple conservation practices for qualifying maple producers may be available through EQIP. These include practices to:
 - Document the operation's energy use and improve energy efficiency.





- Install a reverse osmosis unit to filter sap and remove up to 75% of the water prior to it reaching the evaporator.
- Install a steam enhance preheater, sap preheater, or high efficiency evaporator to improve evaporation rates.
- Improve the overall health of sugar bush stands.
- NRCS's **Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)** is available for eligible maple producers to maintain and improve existing conservation systems and adopt additional conservation practices to address priority resource concerns. Enhancements might include a forest management plan to strengthen an existing sugar bush or sugar bush management to establish or maintain species diversity.

NRCS also offers free one-on-one technical assistance to support maple producers throughout the production process. Visit farmers.gov/conserve to learn more about conservation opportunities for your operation.

Recovery Support for Maple Producers

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Risk Management Agency (RMA) offer coverage and programs to help you prepare for and recover from natural disasters.

- **Federal crop insurance** is administered through RMA to provide a robust and reliable farm safety net, regardless of the size and scope of natural disasters. RMA's **Whole-Farm Revenue Protection (WFRP)** covers all commodities on the farm, including maple, under one insurance policy. WFRP is available for producers nationwide and is tailored for any farm with up to \$8.5 million in insured revenue, including farms with specialty or organic commodities, or those marketing to local, regional, farm-identity preserved, specialty, or direct markets.

- FSA's **Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)** helps producers manage risk through coverage for both crop losses and crop planting that was prevented due to natural disasters. The eligible or "noninsured" crops cover agricultural commodities not covered by federal crop insurance, including specialty crops such as maple sap.
- Through the **Tree Assistance Program (TAP)**, FSA offers financial assistance to eligible orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes, and vines lost due to natural disasters. This includes eligible maple trees from which an annual crop is produced for commercial purposes.

Visit farmers.gov/recover to learn more about USDA resources to manage risk and recover from natural disasters. You can use our **Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool** to learn about USDA disaster assistance programs that might be right for you in five simple steps. For an overview of available disaster assistance, view or download the **USDA Disaster Assistance Programs At-A-Glance brochure**.

Get Started with USDA

USDA provides free, one-on-one assistance to agricultural producers through local USDA Service Centers across the nation. While USDA offices are closed to visitors because of the pandemic, Service Center staff continue to work with agricultural producers via phone, email, and other digital tools.

To conduct business, please contact your **local USDA Service Center**. Additionally, more information related to USDA's response and relief for producers can be found at farmers.gov/coronavirus.