

FSA
HANDBOOK

Organic Certification Cost Share Program

For State and County Offices

SHORT REFERENCE

1-OCCSP

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Farm Service Agency
Washington, DC 20250

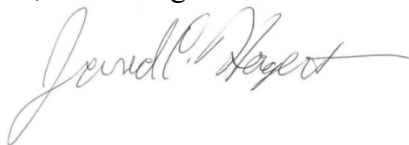
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Farm Service Agency
Washington, DC 20250

**Organic Certification Cost Share Program
1-OCCSP**

Amendment 13

Approved by: Deputy Administrator, Farm Programs



Amendment Transmittal

A Reasons for Amendment

Subparagraphs 1 B, 30 B, 40 A, and 40 B have been amended to include the program years through 2026.

Subparagraph 1 D has been amended to update the program authority.

Subparagraphs 1 I and 30 A have been amended to add program year 2025 and 2026 application periods.

Subparagraph 2 G has been amended to change PT to PA.

Subparagraphs 21 A and B have been amended to include a 2025 program year provision for possessing a USDA certification.

Subparagraph 23 A has been amended to include date expenses paid for program years 2025 and 2026.

Subparagraph 31 A has been amended to update items to be completed on CCC-884.

Subparagraph 31 B has been amended to add updated CCC-884.

Subparagraph 33 B has been amended to include adjustments.

Subparagraph 41 H has been amended to update contact information.

Subparagraph 46 A has been amended to update the program years to 2025 and 2026 and update the action for CCC-884A, item 5.

Subparagraph 46 B has been amended to add updated CCC-884A.

Amendment Transmittal (Continued)

A Reasons for Amendment (Continued)

Subparagraph 50 C has been amended to update the example of CCC-884A and the program code in the tables.

Exhibit 4 has been amended to include adjustments.

Exhibit 7 has been amended to update the CCC-884 item number in the letter.

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Part 1 General Information

1 Overview

A Handbook Purpose

This handbook provides policy and procedure to State and County Offices for administering OCCSP for 2017 and subsequent years.

B OCCSP Purpose

OCCSP provides cost share assistance to producers and handlers who are obtaining organic certification for the first time or renewing their previous certification. Organic certification is obtained through certifying agents accredited by the USDA NOP.

--For the 2023 through 2026 program years, reimbursement for 75 percent of a certified-- operation's allowable certification costs will be provided by OCCSP, up to a maximum of \$750 for each of the following categories, or "scopes":

- crops
- wild crops
- livestock
- processing/handling
- State organic program fees.

For the 2020 through 2022 program years, the authorized reimbursement amount is 50 percent of a certified operation's allowable certification costs, up to a maximum of \$500 for each scope.

For the 2017 through 2019 program years, the authorized reimbursement amount is 75 percent of a certified operation's allowable certification costs, up to a maximum of \$750 for each scope.

Currently there are no transitional certification programs established under the Organic Food Production Act of 1990, or the NOP regulation in 7 CFR Part 205. Therefore, transitional certification is **not** an eligible scope under OCCSP.

Cost share assistance is provided on a **first-come, first-served basis**, until all available funds are obligated. Applications received after all funds are obligated will **not** be paid.

1 Overview (Continued)

1 Overview

C Program History and Administration

USDA implemented OCCSP through AMS beginning in FY 2008. In FY's 2008 through 2016, AMS administered the program through grant agreements with State agencies, which allowed State agencies to accept applications from producers and handlers and make cost share payments after receiving funds through AMS.

For FY 2017 and subsequent years, the Secretary has delegated FSA authority to administer OCCSP on behalf of CCC. FSA will provide cost share assistance in the following two ways:

- State agencies may continue to provide cost share payments to producers and handlers by establishing a grant agreement with FSA
- producers and handlers may apply directly to an FSA County Office for cost share payments.

Note: In States where a State agency continues to participate in OCCSP, OCCSP applicants shall **not** apply through both the State agency and FSA County Office for cost share assistance for the same scope in the same program year.

1 Overview (Continued)

D Authority

OCCSP provisions for FY's 2019 through 2023 were announced through Notice of Funds Availability 84 FR 17997 published on April 29, 2019. A notice amending the prior provisions was published on August 10, 2020, to change the cost share amount and maximum payment per scope (85 FR 48149). OCCSP provisions for FY 2024 were *--announced through Notice of Funds Availability 89 FR 39579 published on May 9, 2024. OCCSP provisions for FY 2025 and future years were announced through final rule (91 FR 40859) published on July 6, 2026:--*

- Section 10606(d) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 6523(d)), as amended by Section 10105 of the Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018 (2018 Farm Bill, Pub. L. 115-334) and the Further Continuing Appropriations and Other *--Extensions Act, 2024 (Pub. L. 118-22), and the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (Pub. L. 119-21) providing National funding through 2031--*
- 7 U.S.C. 1524, as amended by section 1609 of the 2014 Farm Bill, providing **AMA OCCSP funding**, limited to producers for crops, wild crops, and livestock scopes in the following 16 States:
 - Connecticut
 - Delaware
 - Hawaii
 - Maryland
 - Massachusetts
 - Maine
 - Nevada
 - New Hampshire
 - New Jersey
 - New York
 - Pennsylvania
 - Rhode Island
 - Utah
 - Vermont
 - West Virginia
 - Wyoming.

--OCCSP is administered according to the regulations in 7 CFR Part 1417. Organic-- certification under the NOP is authorized by the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6501-6524) and is subject to the regulations in 7 CFR Part 205.

*--**Note:** For FY 2026 and subsequent years, County Offices will not use AMA funding to pay producers unless specifically directed to do so by the National Office.--*

1 Overview (Continued)

E Related Handbooks

Handbooks related to OCCSP include the following:

IF the material concerns...	THEN see...
referring possible fraud cases to OIG	9-AO.
appeals	1-APP.
records management	32-AS.
signatures, powers of attorney, names and addresses, controlled substances, deceased individuals, or closed estates	1-CM.
requests for relief and finality rule provisions	7-CP.
payment processing, including OLP	1-FI.
bankruptcy flags, claims, and withholdings	58-FI.
prompt payment interest	61-FI.
establishing direct deposits, assignments, and joint payees	63-FI.
establishing and reporting receipts and receivables	64-FI.
releasing information through FOIA	2-INFO.
outreach activities	22-AO.

F Modifying Provisions

Provisions in this handbook shall **not** be revised without prior approval from the National Office. Revisions include adding, deleting, editing, clarifying, supplementing, or otherwise amending any procedure, form, or exhibit.

A separate State or county handbook shall **not** be created.

G Forms

Forms, worksheets, applications, and other documents other than those provided in this handbook or issued by the National Office shall **not** be used for OCCSP.

Any document that collects data from a producer or handler, regardless of whether their signature is required, is subject to the Privacy Act and information collection procedures, including clearance of these documents by the following offices:

- National Office program area
- MSD, IMB, Forms and Graphics Section
- OMB.

Forms, worksheets, and documents developed by State or County Offices **must** be submitted to the National Office for review and approval.

Important: State and/or County Office-developed forms, worksheets, or other documents shall **not** be used for OCCSP unless approved by the National Office before use.

1 Overview (Continued)

H Basic Rule of Fractions

Fractions will be rounded after completing the entire computation. In rounding, fractional digits of 49 or less will be dropped and digits of 50 or more will be increased by 1 as follows.

Required Decimal	Computation	Result
Whole Numbers	6.49 or less	6
	6.50 or more	7

I Important Dates

Program Year	COVERS expenses paid from...	AND the application period is...
2017	October 1, 2016, through September 30, 2017	March 20, 2017, through Oct. 31, 2017 (late-filed applications will be accepted if funds are available).
2018	October 1, 2017, through September 30, 2018	October 1, 2017, through Oct. 31, 2018 (late-filed applications will be accepted if funds are available).
2019	October 1, 2018, through September 30, 2019	October 1, 2018, through October 31, 2019 (late-filed applications will be accepted if funds are available).
2020	October 1, 2019, through September 30, 2020	October 1, 2019, through October 31, 2020 (late-filed applications will be accepted if funds are available).
2021	October 1, 2020, through September 30, 2021	October 1, 2020, through October 31, 2021 (late-filed applications will be accepted if funds are available).
2022	October 1, 2021, through September 30, 2022	October 1, 2021, through October 31, 2022 (late-filed applications will be accepted if funds are available).
2023	October 1, 2022, through September 30, 2023	October 1, 2022, through November 1, 2023 (late-filed applications will be accepted if funds are available).
2024	October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024	October 1, 2023, through October 31, 2024 (late-filed applications will be accepted if funds are available).
*--2025	October 1, 2024, through September 30, 2025	July 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026 (see exception in subparagraph 30 A).
2026	October 1, 2025, through September 30, 2026	July 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026 (see exception in subparagraph 30 A).--*

2 Responsibilities

A DAFP Responsibilities

DAFP will:

- develop all OCCSP policies
- ensure that OCCSP is administered according to law and the provisions announced in the NOFA
- provide guidance and instruction on AMA and national OCCSP funding availability
- establish grant agreements with State agencies
- approve reimbursements to State agencies
- ensure that applicants do not receive OCCSP benefits from both a State agency and FSA for the same program year and scope.

B STC Responsibilities

STC's will:

- direct the administration of OCCSP
- ensure that State and County Offices follow OCCSP provisions
- thoroughly document all actions taken in STC meeting minutes
- *--review and take action on all CCC-884's executed by State Office employees, COC members, CED's, County Office employees, and their spouses

Note: For employees or COC members other than SED, STC has authority to delegate authority to a STC representative to review and approve.--*

- provide DD with a copy of STC or DAFP determinations for appeal or misaction and misinformation cases
- handle appeals according to 1-APP and 7 CFR Parts 11 and 780
- require reviews be conducted by STC representative according to subparagraph 33 C to ensure that OCCSP is being implemented according to OCCSP provisions

Note: STC's may establish additional reviews to ensure that OCCSP is administered according to OCCSP provisions.

- handle suspected fraud cases according to applicable procedure.

2 Responsibilities (Continued)

C SED Responsibilities

SED's will:

- ensure that County Offices follow OCCSP provisions
- handle appeals according to 1-APP and 7 CFR Parts 11 and 780
- handle requests for equitable relief according to 7-CP and paragraph 5
- ensure that STC representatives conduct reviews according to subparagraph 33 C

Note: SED may establish additional reviews to ensure that OCCSP is administered according to OCCSP provisions.

- ensure OCCSP is publicized and outreach efforts are completed
- immediately notify the National Office of problems, incomplete or incorrect procedures, and specific problems or findings.

D DD Responsibilities

DD's will:

- ensure that COC's and CED's carryout OCCSP provisions
- conduct reviews according to subparagraph 33 C and any additional reviews established by STC or SED according to subparagraphs B and C
- provide SED with report of all reviews according to subparagraph 33 C.

2 Responsibilities (Continued)

E COC Responsibilities

COC's will:

- fully comply with all OCCSP provisions
- ensure CED's fully comply with all OCCSP provisions
- handle appeals according to 1-APP and 7 CFR Parts 11 and 780
- handle suspected fraud cases according to applicable procedure
- ensure producers receive complete and accurate OCCSP information

Note: OCCSP information may be provided through the following:

- County Office visits
 - fact sheets, leaflets, newsletters, print media, and GovDelivery
 - meetings
 - radio, television, and video.
- ensure that FSA action is taken on CCC-884's in a timely manner.

F CED Responsibilities

CED's will:

- fully comply with all OCCSP provisions
- ensure that County Office employees are adequately trained and fully comply with all OCCSP provisions
- follow procedure in subparagraph 33 B for redelegation of authority
- handle appeals according to 1-APP and 7 CFR Parts 11 and 780
- ensure that modifications to data provided by the applicant are accompanied by applicant initials and dates
- ensure that producers receive complete and accurate OCCSP information
- immediately notify SED, through DD, of problems and incomplete or incorrect procedure
- ensure FSA action is taken on CCC-884's in a timely manner
- ensure that CCC-884A is completed, including 2nd party review, before payment is issued.

2 Responsibilities (Continued)

***--G PA Responsibilities**

PA's will:--*

- fully comply with all OCCSP provisions
- immediately notify CED of problems including incomplete or incorrect procedures
- ensure that producers receive complete and accurate OCCSP information.

3 Outreach

A General Information

As organic producers become a larger part of the agricultural producer segment, it is important that connectivity with USDA through FSA programs is established. Program outreach is a critical component of FSA's objective in ensuring access of information and programs to interested producers and potential producers is provided. FSA outreach activities are National, State, and County Office informational and educational efforts made to promote program benefits and eligibility criteria. Employees are required to conduct outreach activities on programs that align with the Agency's fiscal year outreach goals, which includes OCCSP.

The following types of outreach activities may be conducted to market the program:

- informational meetings
- program workshops and conferences
- stakeholder meetings
- electronic producer newsletters
- press releases
- web announcements and other broadcast media formats.

Example: Radio and television public service announcements.

Outreach efforts are designed to increase participation from potential and current agricultural producers such as underserved communities; outreach efforts are not guaranteed to reach all producers. Employees are encouraged to work with partners to assist with OCCSP outreach efforts.

County and State outreach coordinators, and designated State organic champions, shall engage closely with partnering stakeholders organizations, non-profit organizations, community based organizations, associations and other USDA agencies to participate in and support collaborative outreach activities to promote the program.

Notes: All county and State eligible outreach activity types are required to be recorded in OTIS to report the county's outreach accomplishments that support the Agency's strategic outreach goals.

As resources permit, COC will ensure OCCSP provisions are publicized and maintain a record of all public information efforts, including posting in Service Centers, according to public information and program policies.

3 Outreach (Continued)

B Coordination with Participating State Agencies

State agencies may establish a grant agreement with FSA through the National Office, allowing the State agency to receive OCCSP funds and make payments to certified producers and handlers. If a State agency establishes an agreement to administer OCCSP, both the State agency and FSA County Offices in that State will accept applications and make payments to producers and handlers. Outreach efforts by FSA in those States must include information on both options for applying for the program.

The National Office will:

- notify State Offices in States where a State agency has established an agreement to administer the program

* * *

- provide contact information for participating State agencies at **<https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/occsp/index>**
- provide guidance to State Offices on coordination of outreach efforts with State agencies.

4 Equitable Relief Requests and Appeals

A Equitable Relief and Finality

Equitable relief and finality provisions in 7-CP apply to OCCSP.

If an application is submitted after the end of the application period, the County Office shall accept the late-filed application and consider it to be a request for programmatic relief according to 7-CP.

B Appealable Determinations

Applicants have the right to appeal FSA decisions on CCC-884's when there is a question of fact or a factual dispute or an assertion about correctly applying a rule or generally applicable provision to a set of facts. See 1-APP for appealable determinations.

County Offices will issue a letter to applicants about the result of processing CCC-884 when a payment is either **not** computed or determined **not** to be owed to the applicant. This decision will be considered to be a decision of a COC employee and must provide appeal rights according to 1-APP.

See Exhibit 4 for an example of a letter advising an applicant that a payment was not computed, or will **not** be issued, in response to CCC-884.

C Nonappealable Determinations

Cases involving FSA decisions on CCC-884's that have no disputes of fact are not appealable. Generally applicable provisions are not appealable according to 1-APP, including but not limited to the following:

- eligibility conditions or criteria
- signature requirements
- payment calculations.

Letters notifying applicants that a decision is not appealable must clearly explain to the applicant the reasons that the decision is not appealable.

Note: Avoid using general and vague statements that do not sufficiently demonstrate the reasons that a decision is not appealable. Applicants may request that SED or NAD director review FSA's determination that an adverse decision is not appealable.

5 Misrepresentation, Scheme, or Device

A Determining Misrepresentation, Scheme, or Device

An applicant who is determined to have deliberately misrepresented any fact affecting a program determination or otherwise used a scheme or device with the intent to receive benefits, to which the applicant would not otherwise be entitled, will **not** be entitled to any OCCSP payments.

Scheme and device may include, but is not limited to, any of the following:

- concealing any information having a bearing on the application of the program provisions
- submitting false information to FSA
- any fraudulent representation.

B Liability

The liability of any producer for any payment or refund which is determined to be due FSA is in addition to any other liability of the producer under any civil or criminal fraud statute or any other statute or provision of law.

***--6 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Requirements**

A Background

NEPA of 1969 requires that Federal agencies must consider all potential environmental impacts before implementing activities that have the potential to significantly impact the human environment; all environmental processes must be fully completed before an action can be approved; and agencies must consult with and obtain comments from Federal agencies that manage or have expertise about resources that are potentially affected. FSA's environmental compliance program's mission is to use all practicable means to ensure FSA compliance with all applicable environmental laws, regulations, and procedures. FSA uses an environmental review process to determine the appropriate level of NEPA analysis and documentation required.

B Programmatic Determination of Environment Compliance

The National Office has determined that OCCSP meets all applicable environmental review requirements. FSA-850 has been completed for nationwide OCCSP applications. County Offices are **not** required to complete or file FSA-850 for OCCSP applications.--*

7-20 (Reserved)

Part 2 Eligibility

21 Eligible Applicants

A Producers and Handlers

To be eligible for OCCSP payments, a producer or handler **must** have both of the following:

- a valid organic certification for their operation at the time of application

Notes: The applicant **must** be the certified operation shown on the organic certificate. Certified operations may be individuals or entities.

Operations with DBA on their organic certificate are eligible for OCCSP. Record DBA on the information line for the address in Business Partner to connect the operator of record to the name on the organic certificate.

If an applicant paid certification expenses during the applicable program year but did not receive their certification until after the application deadline, their application can be approved as a late-filed request if that request is submitted by December 31 of the following applicable program year.

Operations with suspended, revoked, or withdrawn certifications at the time of application are ineligible for cost share reimbursement.

--For the 2025 program year, a producer or handler must have possessed a USDA organic certification at any time during the 2025 program year.--

- paid fees or expenses related to its initial certification or renewal of its certification from a certifying agent.

Note: If a third party paid fees or expenses, contact the National Office for guidance.

OCCSP cost share assistance is available for certified producers and handlers located in:

- all 50 States
- District of Columbia
- Commonwealth of Puerto Rico
- Guam
- American Samoa
- United States Virgin Islands
- Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

OCCSP funds are provided through two separate authorizations: **National OCCSP funds** and **AMA OCCSP funds**. National OCCSP funds are available for producers and handlers in all eligible States and territories and for all scopes. AMA OCCSP funds are **only** available for producers in 16 States and are limited to payments for the scopes of crops, wild crops, and livestock. See subparagraph 1 D.

21 Eligible Applicants (Continued)

A Producers and Handlers (Continued)

Notes: The payment calculation workbook will automatically determine whether national OCCSP or AMA OCCSP funds should be used based on a producer's location and scopes, the location of the County Office processing the application, and available funds.

For the 2020 and subsequent program years, AMA funds will not be used for payments by County Offices.

Foreign persons and universities are eligible for OCCSP.

B Verifying Certification Status

To be eligible for OCCSP, applicants must have a valid organic certificate when their application is submitted.

Example: An operation pays organic certification expenses on April 1, 2023, submits a complete OCCSP application on June 1, 2023, and surrenders its organic certificate on June 15, 2023. The operation is eligible for 2023 OCCSP because it had a valid organic certification on the date it applied for OCCSP.

***--Exception:** For program year 2025, an applicant must have possessed a USDA organic certification at any time during the 2025 program year, not at the time of application.--*

Before approving an OCCSP application, the County Office must verify an applicant's organic certification status by:

- confirming that the operation is listed in the Organic Integrity Database at <https://organic.ams.usda.gov/Integrity/>
- contacting the certifying agent listed on the applicant's organic certificate if the operation is **not** listed in the Organic Integrity Database.

***--Note:** County Office must document their findings in the COC minutes.

FSA does **not** make determinations about whether a certified operation meets the--* requirements of the NOP or is following the Organic System Plan.

22 Eligible Scopes

A Overview

OCCSP payments are subject to payment caps based on the following 5 categories of certification expenses or “scopes”:

- crops
- wild crops
- livestock
- handling/processing
- State organic program fees.

Each expense submitted for cost share assistance must be categorized according to the 5 scopes in this subparagraph.

22 Eligible Scopes (Continued)

B USDA Organic Certification Scopes

Organic operations may be certified for any combination of the following scopes identified in the NOP regulations:

- crops
- wild crops
- livestock
- handling/processing.

To be eligible for cost share assistance for any of these 4 scopes, the scopes **must** be listed on the operation's organic certificate.

FSA shall **not** review or make determinations about whether the organic certifier has included the correct scopes on an applicant's organic certificate. If an applicant believes they should be eligible for additional USDA organic certification scopes **not** listed on their organic certificate, it is the applicant's responsibility to contact their organic certifier and request that the additional scopes be added. FSA **cannot** provide cost-share assistance for scopes not listed on the organic certificate.

Notes: Some organic certificates may use “**categories**” or a similar term instead of “**scopes**.” Use of a different term for “**scopes**” does not affect the certified operation's eligibility.

Industrial hemp may be certified as organic if produced according to applicable
 *--statutes and USDA regulations. See NOP guidance at
<https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/NOP%202040%20Hemp%20Instruction.pdf>. Producers of certified organic industrial hemp are eligible for--*
 OCCSP.

C State Organic Program Fees

State Organic Programs may be approved by the Secretary according to the requirements of the NOP. At this time, **only** California has an approved State Organic Program. Producers and handlers located outside of California do **not** incur State Organic Program fees and are **not** eligible to receive OCCSP assistance for this scope.

Some States are accredited by the NOP to act as organic certifying agents; however, this role is different than administering an approved State Organic Program. Amounts paid to a State agency for USDA organic certification services should be reported according to the appropriate scopes in subparagraph B.

23 Eligible Expenses

A Payment in Program Year

OCCSP eligibility is based on the date expenses are **paid** by the certified operation, rather than on the date the organic certification is effective.

Eligible expenses include **only** expenses that are **paid** from:

- October 1, 2016, through September 30, 2017, for the 2017 program year
- October 1, 2017, through September 30, 2018, for the 2018 program year
- October 1, 2018, through September 30, 2019, for the 2019 program year
- October 1, 2019, through September 30, 2020, for the 2020 program year
- October 1, 2020, through September 30, 2021, for the 2021 program year
- October 1, 2021, through September 30, 2022, for the 2022 program year
- October 1, 2022, through September 30, 2023, for the 2023 program year
- October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024, for the 2024 program year
- *--October 1, 2024, through September 30, 2025, for the 2025 program year
- October 1, 2025, through September 30, 2026, for the 2026 program year.--*

Note: Expenses that have been **incurred** during the program year but **not paid** by the applicant are **not eligible** for cost share assistance.

Example: A certified organic producer is inspected by their certifying agent on September 1, 2022, and receives a bill from the certifier on September 15, 2022, indicating the amount due for certification services. The producer pays all expenses related to their certification on October 5, 2022. The producer may apply for cost share assistance for these expenses for the 2023 program year.

B Allowable and Unallowable Costs

Following are the **only** allowable costs accepted:

- application fees and administrative fees
- inspection fees, including travel costs and per diem for organic inspectors
- USDA organic certification costs, including fees necessary to access international markets with which AMS has equivalency agreements or arrangements
- State Organic Program fees (applicable **only** in California)
- user fees or sale assessments
- postage.

23 Eligible Expenses (Continued)

B Allowable and Unallowable Costs (Continued)

Examples of unallowable costs include, but are **not** limited to:

- inspections because of violations to:
 - USDA organic regulations
 - State Organic Program requirements
- costs related to certification other than USDA organic certification

Note: Transitional certification programs are developed by third party certifiers and are **not** a USDA organic certification. Transitional certification is **not** eligible for OCCSP.

- costs related to any other labeling program
- materials, supplies, and equipment
- expediting fees
- late fees
- membership fees
- consultant fees.

*--C Questionable Invoice Costs

Certifiers can answer questions about eligible certification fees, and explain which fees are mandatory and which are optional. Each certifier has a unique fee schedule, which may use different terms to describe itemized expenses. If a certifier mandates certain fees, such as export certification, then those mandatory fees would be eligible for cost share reimbursement. If a certifier includes optional fees, such as consulting or application preparation, then those optional fees would not be eligible for reimbursement.

State and County Offices should contact the certifier headquarters office with questions about which fees are mandatory versus optional for that certifier. Some certifiers also publish fee schedules on their websites, which provide an explanation of itemized costs. Certifier contact information is publicly available at <https://organic.ams.usda.gov/integrity/Certifiers/CertifiersLocationsSearchPage.aspx>.--*

24-29 (Reserved)

Part 3 Application Process

30 Applying for Payment

A Application Periods

OCCSP program years will be on an FY basis. Producers and handlers may apply for OCCSP from:

- March 20, 2017, through October 31, 2017, or until funds for 2017 are no longer available, for the 2017 program year
- October 1, 2017, through October 31, 2018, or until funds for 2018 are no longer available, for the 2018 program year
- October 1, 2018, through October 31, 2019, or until funds are no longer available for the 2019 program year
- October 1, 2019, through October 31, 2020, or until funds are no longer available for the 2020 program year
- October 1, 2020, through October 31, 2021, or until funds are no longer available for the 2021 program year
- October 1, 2021, through October 31, 2022, or until funds are no longer available for the 2022 program year
- October 1, 2022, through November 1, 2023, or until funds are no longer available for the 2023 program year
- October 1, 2023, through October 31, 2024, or until funds are no longer available for the 2024 program year
- *--July 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026, or until funds are no longer available for the 2025 and 2026 program years.

Exception: For 2025 and subsequent program years, if a producer or handler pays allowable costs during a program year but does not receive their initial organic certification until after the OCCSP deadline for that program year, the deadline for the producer or handler to apply through an FSA County Office is 30 days after receiving their organic certification, subject to the availability of funding.--*

Note: Participating State agencies will establish their own application process and deadlines for producers and handlers.

Cost share assistance is provided on a **first-come, first-served basis**, until all available funds are obligated. Applications received after all funds are obligated will **not** be paid. The National Office will provide guidance to State Offices if funds are expected to become unavailable before the end of the application period.

30 Applying for Payment (Continued)

B Application Package

A complete application includes the following:

- a completed CCC-884
- USDA organic certificate

Notes: The format of certificates may vary by certifier.

Certificates do **not** expire.

- itemized invoice showing expenses **paid** to a certifying agent for certification services

Note: Records showing an amount due that do **not** indicate that payment has been made by the producer or handler will **not** be accepted.

- AD-2047, if not previously filed
- SF-3881, if not previously filed

Note: The policy allowing hardship waivers of the EFT requirement applies to OCCSP. See 63-FI.

- CCC-901, Part A, if not previously filed and the applicant is an entity.

Notes: CCC-901 is required for legal entities to identify individuals with signature authority according to 1-CM. If the entity chooses not to provide a completed CCC-901, Part A, the legal entity must provide sufficient documentation to support the authority of the individual signing on behalf of the entity.

Apply the maximum payment per organic certificate and consider entities with separate certificates to be separate producers/handlers. For stores that have separate certificates for different locations, each location is considered a separate *--handler and may obtain up to \$750 per scope for program years 2023 through 2026.--*

Additional documentation may be required by FSA if necessary to verify eligibility or issue the payment.

Notes: OCCSP applicants are **not** required to file an acreage report; however, County Offices may encourage producers who apply for OCCSP to file an acreage report to facilitate participation in other FSA programs and for use in their Organic System Plans.

Participating State agencies may develop their own application forms for OCCSP. FSA will **not** accept a State agency's OCCSP application form in lieu of CCC-884.

30 Applying for Payment (Continued)**C Submitting Applications**

Applicants may submit OCCSP application packages to any County Office:

- in person
- by mail
- e-mail or FAX.

Notes: Questions from producers and handlers who have submitted an application will be referred to the office that is processing that application.

If a County Office receives an OCCSP application from an applicant that is **not** located in their county, the office receiving the application must send the application to the County Office where the operation is located to be processed.

D Incomplete Applications

CCC representative **cannot** act on CCC-884 until the applicant has completed the application and signed Part C.

Note: Incomplete applications or applications that are **not** signed do **not** require action by FSA. Applicants will receive decisions by FSA **only** on complete applications.

County Offices will notify an applicant that their application package is incomplete and give ~~*--the applicant 30 days from the date of notification to submit any additional required--*~~ documentation before disapproving CCC-884. An example notification letter is provided in Exhibit 5.

E Late-Filed Applications

County Offices will accept late-filed application packages after the application deadlines in subparagraph A if the application is filed by December 31 of the following program year.

CCC-884's, and any required information and documentation for CCC-884, submitted after December 31 of the following program year will be received by the County Office and placed in the producer's file.

COC will immediately notify the producer in writing that:

- the application was not filed timely
- assistance cannot be paid.

Note: The letter advising any producer that CCC-884 **cannot** be paid **must** include the basis for the determination and a right of reconsideration according to 1-APP. The right of reconsideration is limited to providing facts and evidence that CCC-884 was not timely filed.

30 Applying for Payment (Continued)

E Late-Filed Applications (Continued)

***--Examples:** An applicant paid certification fees on September 29, 2023, during the 2023 program year, and filed CCC-884 on December 31, 2023. Although the application is filed after the 2023 program year deadline, SED will act on the late-filed application.

An applicant paid certification fees on September 29, 2023, during the 2023 program year, and filed CCC-884 on January 15, 2024. The application is filed after the 2023 program year deadline, and after the December 31, 2023, ***--*** late-filed deadline, and cannot be processed.

Applicants who timely paid all certification expenses during the applicable program year, but did not receive their certification until after the application deadline can be approved as a late-filed request if that request is submitted by December 31 of the following applicable program year.

Funding is available on a **first come, first served basis**. Applications approved after all available funding has been obligated will **not** be paid.

F Amending or Withdrawing CCC-884

Applications may be amended or withdrawn at any time until the end of the application period; however, copies of all submitted CCC-884's **must** be kept in the file.

Applicants may, at any time during the application period, amend CCC-884 to:

- add additional scopes and/or certification costs
- remove scopes and/or certification costs from OCCSP.

Note: Applicants must repay all OCCSP payments received for any scope or certification costs if CCC-884 is withdrawn or amended to remove a scope or certification costs.

31 CCC-884

A Completing CCC-884

--CCC representative will complete items 1, 2, 4, 14B, and 16A-D.--

The producer or handler applying for OCCSP will complete items 2 through 15.

*--

Item	Instructions
1	Enter the FSA administrative State.
2	Enter the FSA administrative county.
3	Enter the program year for which the applicant is applying for benefits. Example: The 2025 program year covers expenses paid between October 1, 2024, and September 30, 2025. Note: Separate CCC-884's must be completed for each program year.
4	Enter the application number. Note: Number in numerical order as received. This number will be assigned by the automated system once in effect.
Part A – Applicant Information	
5	Enter the applicant's name. Notes: The applicant's name must be the name of the certified operation listed on the applicant's organic certificate. See subparagraph 21 A. A person or entity with multiple certified operations must submit separate CCC-884's for each certified operation for which they are requesting payment.
6A-E	Enter the applicant's address (including ZIP code).
7A-B	Enter the applicant's telephone phone number(s).
8	Enter the applicant's email address.
9	Select "yes" or "no" to indicate whether the applicant has recently participated in FSA programs. If "no" is selected, the applicant must also submit a completed AD-2047 and SF-3881 to receive payment.
Part B – Certification Information & Expenses	
10	Enter the name of the organic certifier that issued the organic certification.
11	Enter the applicant's organic operation ID. This number is found on their organic certificate.
12	Enter the current date of certification or date the certificate was issued.

--*

31 CCC-884 (Continued)

A Completing CCC-884 (Continued)

*--

Item	Instructions
13	Select “yes” or “no” to indicate whether the applicant has applied for cost share assistance through a participating State agency for the program year in item 3 and scopes in item 14. Note: Applicants cannot receive duplicate OCCSP payments for the same scope in the same program year through both FSA and a State agency.
14A	Enter the associated expenses (costs) for each applicable scope of activity. For expenses that apply to more than 1 scope, divide the amount by the number of all scopes for which the expense was incurred. Note: Only certified organic operations in California are eligible for cost share assistance for State Organic Program fees. Although some State programs operate as organic certifiers and charge certification fees, only California operates a unique State Organic Program that imposes fees in addition to certification expenses.
14B	Enter CCC Adjustments to the eligible expenses in item 14A, if applicable.
Part C – Applicant Certification Statement	
15A	Applicant’s signature.
15B	Enter applicant’s representative title/relationship to the entity or individual. Note: If applicant is not signing in a representative capacity, this field should be left blank.
15C	Enter the date the form is signed.
Part D – CCC Representative Approval or Disapproval	
16A	CCC representative signature.
16B	Enter CCC representative’s title.
16C	Date the CCC representative took action on the application.
16D	Check action taken on the application (approve or disapprove).

--*

31 CCC-884 (Continued)

B Example of CCC-884

Following is an example of CCC-884.

*__

OMB Approved No: 0560-0289 OMB Expiration Date: 04/30/2029													
CCC-884 (09-04-26) U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE Commodity Credit Corporation ORGANIC CERTIFICATION COST SHARE PROGRAM (OCCSP) <i>(For 2025 and Subsequent Years)</i>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 2px;">1. Administrative State <i>Name Code</i></td> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 2px;">2. Administrative County <i>Name Code</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 20px;"></td> <td style="height: 20px;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">3. Program Year</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">4. Application Number</td> </tr> </table>	1. Administrative State <i>Name Code</i>	2. Administrative County <i>Name Code</i>			3. Program Year	4. Application Number						
1. Administrative State <i>Name Code</i>	2. Administrative County <i>Name Code</i>												
3. Program Year	4. Application Number												
INSTRUCTIONS: Return this completed form to your County FSA Office.													
PART A - APPLICANT INFORMATION													
5. Applicant's Name (Person or Legal Entity)													
6A. Address Line 1	7A. Primary Phone Number ☐ Home ☐ Cell												
6B. Address Line 2	7B. Alternate Phone Number ☐ Home ☐ Cell												
6C. City	6D. State 6E. Zip												
8. Email Address													
9. Have you participated in another FSA program? ☐ YES ☐ NO (If "NO", complete forms AD-2047 and SF-3881)													
PART B - CERTIFICATION INFORMATION & EXPENSES													
10. Name of Organic Certifier	11. Organic Operation ID												
12. Current Date of Certification/ Certificate Issued													
13. Have you applied for cost share funds with your State for the program year in Item 3 (above) and for the Scopes selected in Item 14 (below)? ☐ YES (If "YES", you are ineligible for cost share benefits with FSA.) ☐ NO													
14. Scope of Expenses:	14A. Eligible Expenses												
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;"></td> <td style="width: 50%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Crops (certified organic)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wild Crops (certified organic)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Livestock (certified organic)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Processing/Handling (certified organic)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>State Organic Program Fees</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>				Crops (certified organic)		Wild Crops (certified organic)		Livestock (certified organic)		Processing/Handling (certified organic)		State Organic Program Fees	
Crops (certified organic)													
Wild Crops (certified organic)													
Livestock (certified organic)													
Processing/Handling (certified organic)													
State Organic Program Fees													
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;"></td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center; background-color: #f2f2f2;">FOR COUNTY OFFICE USE ONLY</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">14B. CCC Adjustments</td> </tr> </table>			FOR COUNTY OFFICE USE ONLY		14B. CCC Adjustments								
	FOR COUNTY OFFICE USE ONLY												
	14B. CCC Adjustments												
PART C - APPLICANT CERTIFICATION STATEMENT													
Each applicant must submit a complete application to an FSA county office to be eligible to receive program benefits. A complete application includes form CCC-884, a copy of the applicant's organic certificate, itemized documentation of certification expenses paid by the applicant, and forms AD-2047 and SF-3881 if not previously filed with FSA. By signing this application, applicant:													
1. Agrees to provide FSA any documentation required to determine eligibility and to verify and support all information provided, including applicant's organic certificate; 2. Understands the application may be disapproved if the applicant fails to provide a complete application or any information requested by FSA; 3. Agrees to comply with, and acknowledges the applicant is subject to, all provisions of OCCSP in 7 CFR part 1417 and all other applicable rules and regulations; 4. Understands that OCCSP payments are provided on a first come, first served basis until all available funds are obligated, and applications received after all funds are obligated will not be paid; and 5. Acknowledges that if determined eligible and funding is available, the applicant's certification cost may be adjusted from the amount entered in item 14B to reflect eligible allowable costs indicated by the documentation submitted to support the application.	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; background-color: #f2f2f2; padding: 2px;">DATE STAMP</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 100px;"></td> </tr> </table>	DATE STAMP											
DATE STAMP													

--*

31 CCC-884 (Continued)

B Example of CCC-884 (Continued)

*--

CCC-884 (09-04-26)		Page 2 of 2	
PART C - APPLICANT CERTIFICATION STATEMENT (Continuation)			
I certify that:			
1. The above information provided by me or my legal representative is true and correct. 2. I understand that failure to provide true and correct information may result in the invalidation of this application, a determination of noncompliance or ineligibility, or other remedies or sanctions. 3. I understand that I may not receive duplicate benefits for the same scope of activity and program year from both a State Agency and FSA. If it is determined that I have received duplicate benefits, I have no right to retain those payments.			
15A. Applicant's Signature (By)	15B. Title/Relationship of the Individual Signing in the Representative Capacity	15C. Date (MM/DD/YYYY)	
PART D - CCC Representative Approval or Disapproval			
16A. CCC Representative's Signature (or Designee)	16B. Title	16C. Date (MM/DD/YYYY)	16D. Determination ☐ Approved ☐ Disapproved

Privacy Act Statement: The following statement is made in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC 552a, as amended). The authority for requesting the information identified on this form is 7 CFR part 1417, the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act (15 U.S.C. 714 et seq.), the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1501 et seq., as amended), the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6501 et seq., as amended), the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Pub. L. 107-171), the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (Pub. L. 115-334), and the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (Pub. L. 119-21). The information will be used to determine the applicant's ability to participate in and receive benefits under the Organic Certification Cost Share Program. The information collected on this form may be disclosed to other Federal, State, and Local government agencies, Tribal agencies, and nongovernmental entities that have been authorized access to the information by statute or regulation and/or as described in applicable Routine Uses identified in the System of Records Notice for USDA/FSA2, Farm Records File (Automated). Providing the requested information is voluntary. However, failure to furnish the requested information will result in a determination that the applicant is unable to participate in and receive benefits under the Organic Certification Cost Share Program.

Public Burden Statement (Paperwork Reduction Act): According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0560-0289. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 60 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden by emailing to: askusda@usda.gov (OMB No. 0560-0289).

Non-Discrimination Statement: 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, 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 State or local Agency that administers the program or contact USDA through the Telecommunications Relay Service at 711 (voice and TTY). 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 <https://www.usda.gov/oascr/how-to-file-a-program-discrimination-complaint> 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, Mail Stop 9410, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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

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32 Required Documentation

A Applicant Responsibilities

Application packages are **not** complete and CCC-884 **cannot** be approved unless applicants have provided documentation to support the scopes and associated costs entered on CCC-884. The applicant is responsible for providing documentation for the associated costs for each selected scope in a manner that can be understood by the CCC representative.

B County Office Responsibilities

County Offices shall follow this table when receiving and reviewing documentation.

Step	Action
1	Date stamp original hard copy documentation. Ensure receiving county name is identified.
2	Photocopy original date-stamped documentation submitted by the applicant.
3	Place photocopied data-stamped documentation in the applicant's file.
4	Return original date-stamped documentation to the producer. Note: The original date-stamped documentation can only be returned to the applicant if the photocopies have been made and placed in the applicant's file.
5	Review the applicant's file for previously submitted documentation. Ensure that documentation has not been duplicated.
6	Review all documentation provided by the applicant and determine whether the documentation is acceptable.

Note: State and County Offices shall **not** use unapproved forms, worksheets, applications, or other documents to obtain or collect the data required from applicants to complete CCC-884.

33 Processing CCC-884

A Reviewing and Processing CCC-884

County Offices shall process CCC-884 for each eligible applicant according to this table.

Step	Action
1	Confirm that the applicant has submitted the following, either with CCC-884 or previously on file: • AD-2047 • SF-3881 • CCC-901, Part A, if the applicant is an entity.
2	Confirm that the applicant has submitted documentation to support the scopes and associated costs included on CCC-884.
3	See 1-CM for applicant signature on CCC-884.
4	CCC representative will determine applicant overall eligibility according to Part 2.
5	Follow guidelines in Part 4 for completing CCC-884A.
6	CCC representative will: • act on CCC-884 according to subparagraph B • sign and date Part D.
7	Retain a copy of the completed CCC-884.

33 Processing CCC-884 (Continued)

B CCC-884 Approval or Disapproval

*--CED is responsible for acting on all CCC-884's. This authority may be delegated to a PA for approving CCC-884's. CCC-884 must **not** be approved until a complete application--* package has been submitted. CCC representative **must** act on **all** completed and signed CCC-884's.

*--**Important:** Other than completing item 1, **no** entries will be made on CCC-884 by--* FSA employees, except entries designated for CCC representative use **after** the applicant signs CCC-884. Any additions or corrections **must** be initialed and dated by the applicant.

*--If CCC-884 is disapproved or adjusted, County Offices will immediately notify the applicant in writing of the disapproval or adjustment. See Exhibit 4 for an example notification letter. The letter to the applicant **must** include the following:

- notification that CCC-884 was disapproved or adjusted
- the reason(s) for disapproval or adjustment--*
- applicable appeal rights according to 1-APP.

*--**Note:** CCC representatives will **not** make any determinations about whether a certified--* operation is following the requirements of the NOP. If a County Office employee suspects that a certified operation is violating NOP requirements, they should contact their State Office for guidance.

C Reviewing CCC-884

An STC representative will review the first 3 applications, including documentation and CCC-884A, made in each program year within a Service Center before the applications are approved by the CCC representative. STC's may establish additional reviews to ensure that OCCSP is administered according to OCCSP provisions.

34-39 (Reserved)

Part 4 Payment

Section 1 Payment Provisions

40 Payment Amount

A Overview

OCCSP payments **must** be calculated separately by scope and will be equal to the lesser of:

- for 2019 and prior years:
 - the total allowable certification costs times 75 percent
 - \$750 per scope
- for 2020 through 2022 program years:
 - the total allowable certification costs times 50 percent
 - \$500 per scope
- *--for 2023 through 2026 program years:--*
 - the total allowable certification costs times 75 percent
 - \$750 per scope.

Before calculating the payment amount, County Offices must review documentation and
 *--verify the total allowable expenses. Any expenses that are included by the applicant on
 CCC-884 that are ineligible for cost share must be excluded from the total allowable
 expenses used to calculate the payment.--*

Each eligible expense must be assigned to 1 of the 5 scopes. If a single expense is incurred for more than 1 scope, the amount will be divided by the number of applicable scopes and the result will be applied to each applicable scope when calculating a payment.

40 Payment Amount (Continued)**B Limitations**

A certified operation is limited to a maximum payment of:

- \$750 per scope for the 2019 and prior program years
- \$500 per scope for the 2020 through 2022 program years
- *--\$750 per scope for the 2023 through 2026 program years.--*

Persons or entities with more than one certified operation (such as more than one organic certificate) may receive an OCCSP payment of up to maximum payment per scope for each operation.

Certified operations **cannot** receive a cost share payment for the same scope in the same year from both FSA and a State agency. State agencies will report applicant information to the National Office, and the National Office will determine whether duplicate payments have been made. OCCSP applicants who have received duplicate payments will be required to return the amount of any duplicate payment to FSA.

Note: If records indicate an applicant has received a duplicate payment for the same scope from FSA and their applicable State agency, the applicant must be notified in writing that any duplicate payment must be returned to FSA. Exhibit 7 provides an example letter that may be used as guidance and modified to fit individual situations.

C Sequestration

Sequestration will be applied to the total amount of funding available for OCCSP if required by law. It will **not** be applied after individual payment amounts are calculated.

41 General Provisions

A Obtaining FSA-325

FSA-325 will be completed, according to 1-CM, by individuals or entities requesting payments **earned** by a producer who has died, disappeared, or been declared incompetent subsequent to applying for program benefits. Payments will be issued to the individuals or entities requesting payment using the deceased, incompetent, or disappeared producer's ID number.

Note: If CCC-884 has been filed by the producer, a revised CCC-884 is **not** required when payments are issued under the deceased, incompetent, or disappeared producer's ID number.

B Administrative Offset

OCCSP payments issued by FSA are subject to administrative offsets.

C Bankruptcy

Bankruptcy status does **not** exclude a producer from requesting OCCSP benefits. **Contact the OGC regional attorney for guidance on issuing OCCSP payments on all bankruptcy cases.**

D Assignments and Joint Payments

County Offices shall process assignments and joint payments according to 63-FI.

E Payment Due Date

The online payment system sends the date entered in subparagraph 50 B, Step 5, to NPS as the payment due date.

F Processing Payments

OCCSP payments will be issued as soon as **all** of the following conditions exist:

- The applicant has provided all required program documentation
- CCC-884 is approved.

41 General Provisions (Continued)

G Payments Less Than \$1

--OCCSP payments will:--

- be issued when payments round to at least \$1
- be issued in whole dollars
- **not** be issued when payments are less than 50 cents.

H E-Funds Access

Funding will be maintained at the State level and will **not** be allotted to individual counties; therefore, State Office specialists will **not** need access to the following program funds.

AMA OCCSP funding is established with the following accounting and program codes.

Scope	Accounting Code	Program Code
Crops	6140	XXAMACROP
Wild Crops	6140	XXAMAWILD
Livestock	6140	XXAMALIVE

National OCCSP funding is established with the following accounting and program codes.

Scope	Accounting Code	Program Code
Crops	6150	XXNATCROP
Livestock	6150	XXNATLIVE
Wild Crops	6150	XXNATWILD
Handling/Processing	6152	XXNATFEEHAND
State Organic Program Fees	6152	XXNATFEESOP

To report funding errors, e-mail **all** of the following:

- Jeanne Schmidt at jeanne.schmidt@usda.gov
- *--Jenae Orso at jenae.orso@usda.gov.--*

I Submitting Payment Problems

If there is an issue with an OCCSP payment, State Office specialists should update the applicable information to the OCCSP section list on the payment problem SharePoint website at https://usdagcc.sharepoint.com/sites/fsa-dafp-disaster/Payment_Issues/SitePages/Home.aspx.

42-44 (Reserved)

Section 2 Calculating Payments

45 OCCSP Payment Calculator Worksheet

A Interim Payment Process

Automated OCCSP payment software is not currently available; therefore, an interim payment process has been developed so that OCCSP payments may be issued. When an automated OCCSP payment process is available, the OCCSP interim payment process will be disabled.

A payment calculator worksheet based on CCC-884A has been developed by the National Office and **must** be used by County Offices to manually calculate OCCSP payments. The payment amounts determined using the payment calculator worksheet will be issued using the OCCSP interim payment process.

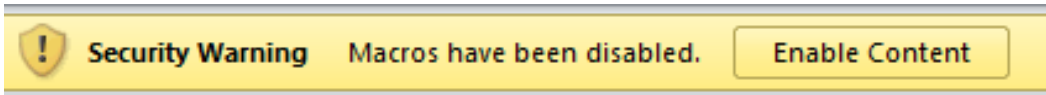
Note: The workbook will determine the proper accounting code to use in the online payment software. * * *

45 OCCSP Payment Calculator Worksheet (Continued)

B Accessing and Saving the Payment Calculator Worksheet

The following table provides instructions for accessing and saving the OCCSP payment calculator worksheet.

*--

Step	Action
1	Access the DAFP Organic Certification Cost Share Program page at https://usdagcc.sharepoint.com/sites/FPAC-FSA-OCCSP/SitePages/Home.aspx .
2	Click “Payment Calculator”.
3	Click the applicable program year. Example: 2024 Program Year.
4	Open the calculator. Example: “2024 884a occsp payment calculator revised 01222024”.
5	Select “File”, then “Save As”, and “Download a Copy”. A “Downloads” dialog box will be displayed.
6	CLICK “ Open ” in the “File Download” dialog box.
7	At the top of the screen, between the toolbar and the window, the following security warning will be displayed.  CLICK “Enable Content”. Note: This step needs to be performed every time the worksheet is opened. Warning: Do not attempt to permanently enable macros because this will make the calculator unusable and could potentially create a security breach.
8	Save the document by doing the following: • CLICK “”, scroll down and CLICK “Save As” • CLICK “Excel Macro Enabled Workbook” • navigate to user’s desktop • CLICK “Save”. By following these steps, the document will be placed on the user’s desktop with an icon. The document will be named “CCC-884A.xlsm”.

--*

Note: The payment calculator worksheet is for FSA internal use **only** and will **not** be distributed.

45 OCCSP Payment Calculator Worksheet (Continued)

C Creating Folders for Payment Calculators Worksheets

The following table provides instructions for creating folders to enable saving of OCCSP payment calculator worksheets. These instructions **only need to be completed 1 time** at each Service Center for each program year. All CCC-884A worksheets for a program year can be saved to this location.

Step	Action
1	Do either of the following: - on the desktop, DOUBLE CLICK “My Computer”  - at the bottom left corner of user’s screen, RIGHT CLICK “Start”  and CLICK “Explore”.
2	DOUBLE CLICK “ (S:) ” drive.
3	DOUBLE CLICK “ Service_Center ” folder.
4	DOUBLE CLICK “ FSA ” folder.
5	CLICK “ Make a new Folder ”. If this option is not available, right click in the blank white area within the folder window, CLICK “ New ”, and then CLICK “ New Folder ”.
6	A new folder will be placed in the “S:\Service_Center\FSA” folder, with the default name of “New Folder”.
7	The new folder must be renamed. RIGHT CLICK, “ New Folder ” and CLICK “ Rename ”.
8	*--Rename the folder as “ 202X CCC-884A Worksheets ”.--*

D Saving Payment Calculator Worksheets

Users shall save payment calculator worksheets according to this table.

Step	Action
1	CLICK “

A CCC-884A Instructions

Complete CCC-884A according to the following table.

***--Notes:** Items in these instructions for CCC-884A correspond to the item numbers in the OCCSP payment calculator worksheet for the 2025 and 2026 program years.

The CCC-884A is located at <https://usdagcc.sharepoint.com/sites/FPAC-FSA-OCCSP>, “Payment Calculator”.

Item	Action
1A	Enter the county FSA name.
1B	Enter the State.
2	Enter the program year entered in CCC-884, item 3.
3	Enter the applicant’s name as entered on CCC-884, item 5.
4	Enter the applicant’s State.
5	The list of scopes is pre-filled.
6	Enter the total associated expenses for each scope as entered on CCC-884, item 14A or 14B (if applicable). Note: The associated expenses must be supported by documentation.
7	Enter the sum of any ineligible expenses that were included in the associated expenses from CCC-884, item 14A or 14B (if applicable), as determined by the CCC representative based on the documentation.
8	Enter the total allowable expenses, determined by subtracting item 7, Ineligible Expenses, from item 6, Total Associated Expenses. Note: This will be automatically calculated by the Excel payment calculator worksheet.
9	Multiply item 8, Total Allowable Expenses, by 75 percent. Note: This will be automatically calculated by the Excel payment calculator worksheet.
10	The maximum payment amount of \$750 is pre-filled.
11	Enter the lesser of the item 9 or item 10. Note: This will be automatically calculated by the Excel payment calculator worksheet.
12	Enter the applicable program code. Note: This will be automatically completed by the Excel payment calculator worksheet.
13A	Enter the signature of the preparer.
13B	Enter the title of the preparer.
13C	Enter the date the preparer signed CCC-884A.
14A	Enter the signature of the 2 nd party reviewer.
14B	Enter the title of the 2 nd party reviewer.
14C	Enter the date the 2 nd party reviewer completed the review.

--*

46 Completing CCC-884A (Continued)

B Example CCC-884A

The following is an example of the manual CCC-884A, Excel Worksheet.

*--

CCC-884A (08-26-28)		U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE Commodity Credit Corporation		1a. County FSA Name		1b. State		2. Program Year (from CCC-884, Item 3)	
ORGANIC CERTIFICATION COST SHARE PROGRAM MANUAL PAYMENT WORKSHEET FOR 2025 AND 2026 PROGRAM YEARS				3. Applicant Name (from CCC-884, Item 5)			4. Applicant's State		
5. Scope (From CCC-884, Item 14)	6. Total Associated Expenses	7. Ineligible Expenses	8. Total Allowable Expenses (Item 6 - Item 7)	9. Allowable Expenses x 75% (Item 8 x 75%)	10. Maximum Payment Amount	11. Calculated OCCSP Payment: Lesser of 75% of Allowable Expenses or Maximum Payment Amount (Item 9 or Item 10)		12. Program Code	
Crops					\$750.00				
Wild Crops					\$750.00				
Livestock					\$750.00				
Processing/Handling					\$750.00				
State Organic Program Fees					\$750.00				
13A. Signature of Preparer			13B. Title of Preparer			13C. Date Signed (MM-DD-YYYY)			
14A. Signature of 2 nd Party Reviewer			14B. Title of 2 nd Party Reviewer			14C. Date Signed (MM-DD-YYYY)			

--*

47-49 (Reserved)

Section 3 Processing Payments

50 Entering OCCSP Payments

A Background

Amounts calculated using CCC-884A will be recorded through OLP, according to 1-FI, Part 3.

B Recording Payment

*--County Offices will issue the OCCSP payments through OLP, according to this table.

Reminder: OCCSP payment amounts will **not** be issued through OLP until all--* documentation requirements have been met and the producer's CCC-884 is approved according to Part 3.

Step	Action	Result
1	Access "Online Payment Home Page" according to 1-FI, Part 3.	The Online Payment page will be displayed.
2	CLICK "Create Payment" on the Online Payment page.	The Create Payment-Customer Search Screen will be displayed.
3	On the Create Payment - Customer Search Screen: - select the State and county - enter the program code: - CLICK "SCIMS", enter TIN and select TIN type - CLICK "Next". Notes: A producer must operate under the same name and TIN for all their farming operations with FSA to be eligible for OCCSP reimbursement. The program code is provided in CCC-884A, item 12. AMA OCCSP program codes will not be accepted by OLP after October 1 of the following program year. For payments being issued after October 1, a revised payment calculator worksheet will be released that only provides national OCCSP program codes. Example: A producer in 1 of the 16 AMA-eligible States submits a *--complete application package on September 30, 2020, but the payment is not entered in OLP until November 2, 2020.--* The County Office will: - use the revised payment calculator worksheet to calculate the payment amount - enter only national OCCSP programs codes and not AMA OCCSP program codes into OLP. - CLICK "Select".	The SCIMS Customer Search page will be displayed.

50 Entering OCCSP Payments (Continued)

B Recording Payment (Continued)

Step	Action	Result
4	SELECT the applicable producer on the SCIMS Customer Search page.	The Create Payment-Payment Entry Screen will be displayed.
5	On the Create Payment-Payment Entry Screen enter the following data: • payment amount Note: The payment amount is provided in Item 11 for the corresponding program code in CCC-884A, Item 12. • confirm amount – same as payment amount • issue date – enter date payment is to be issued • prompt payment due date – enter date • application number – ENTER “0001” • CLICK “Add”.	The Create Payment-Payment Detail Screen will be displayed.
6	A confirmation message will be displayed that “Payment has been successfully created. This payment request must be certified and signed in NPS.” PRESS “OK” on the Create Payment – Payment Detail Screen.	The Create Payment – Customer Search Screen will be displayed.

50 Entering OCCSP Payments (Continued)

C Example of Determining OCCSP Payment Information

The following is an example of a worksheet for a county in Florida that includes the scopes of crops and processing/handling.

*--

CCC-884A (08-26-26)				U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE Commodity Credit Corporation				1a. County FSA Name	1b. State	2. Program Year (from CCC-884, Item 3)	
ORGANIC CERTIFICATION COST SHARE PROGRAM MANUAL PAYMENT WORKSHEET FOR 2025 AND 2026 PROGRAM YEARS								Aluchua	FL	2025	
								3. Applicant Name (from CCC-884, Item 5)		4. Applicant's State	
								Albert the Alligator		FL	
5. Scope (From CCC-884, Item 14)	6. Total Associated Expenses	7. Ineligible Expenses	8. Total Allowable Expenses (Item 6 - Item 7)	9. Allowable Expenses x 75% (Item 8 x 75%)	10. Maximum Payment Amount	11. Calculated OCCSP Payment: Lesser of 75% of Allowable Expenses or Maximum Payment Amount (Item 9 or Item 10)	12. Program Code				
Crops	\$750.00		\$750.00	\$562.50	\$750.00	\$562.50	25NATCROP				
Wild Crops					\$750.00						
Livestock					\$750.00						
Processing/Handling	\$1,300.00		\$1,300.00	\$975.00	\$750.00	\$750.00	25NATFEEHAND				
State Organic Program Fees					\$750.00						
13A. Signature of Preparer				13B. Title of Preparer				13C. Date Signed (MM-DD-YYYY)			
14A. Signature of 2 nd Party Reviewer				14B. Title of 2 nd Party Reviewer				14C. Date Signed (MM-DD-YYYY)			

Print

--*

The following table provides the steps that would be followed in OLP for the scope of “Crops” based on the example above.

Step	Action	Result
1	Access “Online Payment Home Page” according to 1-FI, Part 3.	The Online Payment page will be displayed.
2	CLICK “Create Payment” on the Online Payment page.	The Create Payment – Customer Search Screen will be displayed.
3	On the Create Payment – Customer Search Screen: - select the State and county *--ENTER program code – 25NATCROP--* - CLICK “SCIMS”, enter TIN and select TIN type - CLICK “Next” - CLICK “Select”.	The SCIMS Customer Search page will be displayed.

50 Entering OCCSP Payments (Continued)

C Example of Determining OCCSP Payment Information (Continued)

Step	Action	Result
4	Select the applicable producer on the SCIMS Customer Search page.	The CREATE Payment – Payment Entry Screen will be displayed.
5	On the Create Payment – Payment Entry Screen ENTER the following data: • payment amount – \$562.50 • confirm amount – \$562.50 • issue date - enter date payment is to be issued • prompt payment due date – enter date • application number – ENTER “0001” • CLICK “Add”.	The Create Payment – Payment Detail Screen will be displayed.
6	PRESS “OK” on the Create Payment – Payment Detail Screen.	The Create payment – Customer Search Screen will be displayed.

The following table provides the steps that would be followed in OLP for the scope of “Processing/Handling” based on the example above.

Step	Action	Result
1	Access “Online Payment Home Page” according to 1-FI, Part 3.	The Online Payment page will be displayed.
2	CLICK “Create Payment” on the Online Payment page.	The Create Payment – Customer Search Screen will be displayed.
3	On the Create Payment – Customer Search Screen: • select the State and county • *--ENTER program code – 25NATFEEHAND--* • CLICK “SCIMS”, enter TIN and select TIN type • CLICK “Next” • CLICK “Select”.	The SCIMS Customer Search page will be displayed.

50 Entering OCCSP Payments (Continued)

C Example of Determining OCCSP Payment Information (Continued)

Step	Action	Result
4	SELECT the applicable producer on the SCIMS Customer Search page.	The CREATE Payment – Payment Entry Screen will be displayed.
5	On the Create Payment – Payment Entry Screen enter the following data: •*--payment amount – \$750.00 • confirm amount – \$750.00--* • issue date – enter date payment is to be issued • prompt payment due date – enter date • application number – ENTER “0001” • CLICK “Add”.	The Create Payment – Payment Detail Screen will be displayed.
6	PRESS “OK” on the Create Payment – Payment Detail Screen.	The Create payment – Customer Search Screen will be displayed.

51-54 (Reserved)

Section 4 Modifying Payments

55 General Provisions for Modifying Payments

A Modifying Payment Amounts

If the previously recorded payment has been determined to be incorrect, access OLP according to 1-FI and modify payments

The following table provides information about how modifying a payment can result in an additional payment or overpayment.

IF the payment in NPS was...	THEN the...
not signed	• payment will be canceled in NPS • modified payment will be sent to NPS.
certified and signed	• difference will be sent to NPS as a payment if the modified amount is greater than the payment amount originally entered • difference is an overpayment and will be sent to NRRS if the modified amount is less than the payment amount originally entered. Important: If the payment is determined to be unearned by the producer then the payment amount should be modified to be zero. Unsigned payments will be canceled and signed payments will be sent as an overpayment to NRRS.

Reports, Forms, Abbreviations, and Redelegations of Authority

Reports

None

Forms

This table lists all forms referenced in this handbook.

Number	Title	Display Reference	Reference
AD-2047	Customer Data Worksheet Request for Business Partner Record Change		30, 31, 33
CCC-884	Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP) (For 2025 and Subsequent Years)	31	Text
CCC-884A	Organic Certification Cost Share Program Manual Payment Calculation Worksheet for 2025 and 2026 Program Years	46	2, 33, 45, 50
CCC-901	Member's Information Agricultural Act of 2014		30, 33
FSA-325	Application for Payment of Amounts Due Persons Who Have Died, Disappeared, or Have Been Declared Incompetent		41
SF-3881	ACH Vendor/Miscellaneous Payment Enrollment Form		30, 31, 33

Abbreviations Not Listed in 1-CM

The following abbreviations are not listed in 1-CM.

Approved Abbreviation	Term	Reference
AMA	Agricultural Management Assistance	1, 2, 21, 41, 50
DBA	Doing Business As	21
NOFA	Notice of Funds Availability	2, 3
NOP	National Organic Program	1, 21, 22, 34, Ex. 2
OCCSP	Organic Certification Cost Share Program	Text
OLP	Online Payments	1, 50, 55
OTIS	Outreach Tracking Information System	3
PA	program Analyst	2, 33

Reports, Forms, Abbreviations, and Redelegations of Authority**Redelegations of Authority**

This table lists the redelegations of authority in this handbook.

Redelegation	Reference
* * *	* * *
SED is delegated authority to approve late-filed CCC-884's if filed by December 31 of the following program year.	Subparagraph 30 E
--CED may redelegate responsibility to PT for approving timely-filed-- CCC-884's.	Subparagraph 33 B

Definitions of Terms Used in This Handbook**Certifying Agent**

Certifying agent means any entity accredited by the Secretary as a certifying agent for the purpose of certifying a production or handling operation as a certified organic production or handling operation. In some States, a State Agency may operate as a certifying agent.

Certified Operation

Certified operation means a producer or handler that has obtained USDA organic certification.

Crop

Crop includes pastures, cover crops, green manure crops, catch crops, or any plant or part of a plant intended to be marketed as an agricultural product, fed to livestock, or used in the field to manage nutrients and soil fertility.

Handler

Handler means any person or operation engaged in the business of handling agricultural products, including producers who handle crops or livestock of their own production, but not including final retailers that do not process agricultural products.

Inspection

Inspection means the act of examining and evaluating the production or handling operation of an applicant for certification or certified operation to determine compliance with the requirements of the NOP.

Inspector

Inspector means any person retained or used by a certifying agent to conduct inspections of certification applicants or certified production or handling operations.

Definitions of Terms Used in This Handbook (Continued)**Labeling**

Labeling includes all written, printed, or graphic material accompanying an agricultural product at any time or written, printed, or graphic material about the agricultural product displayed at retail stores about the product.

Livestock

Livestock includes any cattle, sheep, goats, swine, poultry, or equine animals used for food or in the production of food, fiber, feed, or other agricultural-based consumer products; wild or domesticated game; or other non-plant life, but does not include aquatic animals for the production of food, fiber, feed, or other agricultural based consumer products.

Organic

Organic is a labeling term that refers to an agricultural product produced in accordance with the requirements OFPA and NOP.

Organic Integrity Database

Organic Integrity Database means the database maintained by AMS that contains data for certified organic operations submitted by their certifying agents, available at <https://apps.ams.usda.gov/integrity>.

Organic Production

Organic production means a production system that is managed in accordance with the OFPA and NOP to respond to site-specific conditions by integrating cultural, biological, and mechanical practices that foster cycling of resources, promote ecological balance, and conserve biodiversity.

Organic System Plan

Organic System Plan means a plan of management of an organic production or handling operation that has been agreed to by the producer or handler and the certifying agent and that includes written plans concerning all aspects of agricultural production or handling described in the OFPA and NOP regulations.

Definitions of Terms Used in This Handbook (Continued)**Processing**

Processing includes cooking, baking, curing, heating, drying, mixing, grinding, churning, separating, extracting, slaughtering, cutting, fermenting, distilling, eviscerating, preserving, dehydrating, freezing, chilling, or otherwise manufacturing and includes the packaging, canning, jarring, or otherwise enclosing food in a container.

Producer

Producer means a person or operation that engages in the business of growing or producing food, fiber, feed, and other agricultural-based consumer products.

State Agency

State Agency means the agency, commission, or department of a State government, U.S. Territories (including the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the United States Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands), or District of Columbia responsible for agriculture under their jurisdiction.

State Organic Program

State Organic Program means a State program that meets the requirements of the OFPA and NOP, is approved by the Secretary, and is designed to ensure that a product that is sold or labeled as organically produced under the OFPA is produced and handled using organic methods.

USDA Organic Certification

USDA organic certification means a determination made by a certifying agent that a production or handling operation is in compliance with the OFPA and the NOP's regulations in 7 CFR part 205, which is documented by a certificate of organic operation.

Wild Crop

Wild crop includes any plant or portion of a plant that is collected or harvested from a site that is not maintained under cultivation or other agricultural management.

--Letter Notifying Applicant of Disapproval or Adjustment--

The following is an example of a letter to an applicant notifying them that their application has been
*--disapproved or adjusted and providing appeal rights. An MS Word version of this letter is available
as a template at <https://usdagcc.sharepoint.com/sites/FPAC-FSA-OCCSP/SitePages/Home.aspx>.

[Date]

Mr. Organic Farmer
1400 Independence Avenue
Anytown, USA 12345-9876

Dear Mr. Farmer:

This letter is in response to your Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP) application for the [insert year] program year.

FSA has processed your application; however, we have [insert correct statement: determined you are not eligible for a payment or made an adjustment to your application] because [insert description of basis for disapproval or adjustment].

If you believe we have not properly reviewed your application, you may appeal this determination to the county committee by filing a written request no later than 30 days after you receive this notice in accordance with the FSA appeal procedures found at 7 CFR Part 780. If you appeal to the county committee, you have the right to an informal hearing which you or your representative may attend either personally or by telephone. If you appeal this determination to the county committee, you may later appeal any adverse determination of the county committee to the FSA State committee or the National Appeals Division. To appeal, write to the county committee at the following address and explain why you believe this determination is erroneous.

Somewhere County FSA Committee
55 Main St.
Somewhereville, USA 12345-6789

If you do not timely file an appeal of this determination, this shall be the final administrative determination with respect to this matter in accordance with regulations at 7 CFR 780.

Sincerely,

Sharina Farmer
County Executive Director

--*

Letter Notifying Applicant of Incomplete Application Package

The following is an example of a letter to an applicant notifying them that their application package was incomplete and additional information is needed to process their application. An MS Word *--version of this letter is available as a template at <https://usdagcc.sharepoint.com/sites/FPAC-FSA-OCCSP/SitePages/Home.aspx>.--*

[Date]

Mr. Organic Farmer
1400 Independence Avenue
Anytown, USA 12345-9876

Dear Mr. Farmer:

This letter is in response to your application for the Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP) for the [insert year] program year.

FSA has received form CCC-884; however, we have determined that your application package is incomplete. Please submit the following information and/or documentation to FSA so that we may process your application:

- [List additional documentation needed]

Please submit the requested information by [insert program year deadline]. If the requested information is not received by [insert program year deadline], your application will be disapproved. Please contact us at your earliest convenience if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Sharina Farmer
County Executive Director

Letter Notifying Applicant Original Documents Are Being Returned

The following is an example of a letter to an applicant notifying them that their original documents are being returned in the mail. This letter is available in MS Word and can be found at

--<https://usdagcc.sharepoint.com/sites/FPAC-FSA-OCCSP/SitePages/Home.aspx>--

[Date]

Mr. Organic Farmer
1400 Independence Avenue
Anytown, USA 12345-9876

Dear Mr. Farmer:

This letter is in response to your Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP) application for the [insert year] program year.

We have received your application and will begin the review process. We have made copies of the enclosed documentation for our records and are returning your original documents at this time.

Sincerely,

Sharina Farmer
County Executive Director

Letter Notifying Applicant Who Received a Duplicate Payment From FSA and a State Agency

The following is an example of a letter to an applicant notifying them that our records indicate they have received a duplicate OCCSP payment for the same scope from FSA and their applicable State agency. This language is provided as guidance and may be modified to fit individual situations. The letter is intended for a COC decision. A letter must be sent and copy of the notification kept in the file. Receivable letters must be provided in addition to this letter.

*--

Dear **(Enter name of CCC-884 Producer)**

This letter is in reference to a duplicate payment you received under the Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP) for **(enter the scope)**.

Each certified operation may receive an OCCSP payment of up to maximum payment per scope. Certified operations cannot receive duplicate cost share payments for the same scope in the same year from FSA and a State agency. OCCSP applicants who have received duplicate payments are required to return the amount of any duplicate payment to FSA.

On your CCC-884 you checked “No” to item 13 indicating you have not applied for cost share funds with your State agency. **[Insert language explaining the duplicate payments.]**

The **(enter applicable county)** County Committee (COC) has determined that one or more exceptions to application of the finality rule (7 CFR 718.306) apply, as you have either intentionally or unintentionally misrepresented facts concerning your OCCSP eligibility, or you had reason to know that FSA erred in determining your payment eligibility. You will be notified by separate communication of amounts owed FSA as a result of this determination.

If you believe the facts of this decision are not correct, you may file a written appeal of this determination within 30 days of your receipt of this determination. You have the following administrative appeal review options: **(Insert appropriate language from 1-APP for a COC decision and include all appropriate and applicable review rights according to 1-APP for a COC adverse decision)**.

Sincerely,

County Executive Director

--*

