



## USDA Partners with FarmRaise to Offer Educational Tools and Resources to Promote Financial Access and Equity for Agricultural Producers

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### *Disaster Assistance, and Farm Loan Resources Now Available Online*

Bangor, ME, April 17, 2024- The U.S Department of Agriculture (USDA) today unveiled a new, online Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) Decision Tool and farm loan resources available to agricultural producers and cooperators who help producers access USDA disaster assistance, farm loans and other federal farm programs. The new LIP tool and the farm loan informational video resources were developed in partnership with FarmRaise and USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA). These tools are now available at [www.farmraise.com/usda-fsa](http://www.farmraise.com/usda-fsa).

"By providing collaborative outreach and technical assistance to the agricultural community, the Farm Service Agency's partnerships with organizations like FarmRaise, Inc. increase awareness of and broader participation in our extensive suite of farm and farm loan programs," said FSA State Executive Director Sherry Hamel, "Offering innovative tools and resources with help from our cooperators breaks down program delivery barriers ensuring equitable access to our programs for millions of rural, urban and small-scale to mid-sized producers."

### **Current FarmRaise Tools and Resources**

[FarmRaise, Inc.](#) has created an online, [educational hub](#) -- called [Farm Service Agency 101](#) - comprised of videos, and resources that enable cooperators and the agricultural producers they serve to learn about and access major FSA programs.

The newly launched LIP Decision Tool assists livestock producers who suffered losses from eligible adverse weather events and other causes of loss as well as cooperators who are helping disaster-impacted livestock producers navigate available federal disaster assistance programs. The optional decision tool gives producers guidance on what is needed to gather and submit required loss documentation, reducing the amount of time needed to complete applications and enabling FSA county office staff to deliver much-needed assistance faster. Using this tool, however, is not an application for benefits or a determination of eligibility.

Through use of the LIP tool, livestock producers can provide supporting documentation, inventory numbers, and loss numbers to FSA county offices. Doing so, in advance of the initial county office

visit, will help FSA staff serve customers more effectively and efficiently. Producers will also need to complete an application for LIP assistance and, upon request, may be asked to provide additional supporting documentation.

[LIP](#) offers payments to livestock producers for livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality caused by qualifying adverse weather events. LIP also covers losses due to eligible diseases and attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the federal government or protected by federal law. This includes attacks by wolves and predatory birds.

In addition to the new LIP Decision Tool, the FarmRaise educational hub offers several, easily navigated farm loan programs how-to videos designed to introduce producers to FSA's many farm loan programs options and guide them through the application process.

More FSA program resources and tools will soon be added to the FarmRaise educational hub. Cooperators and agricultural producers are encouraged to visit the FarmRaise educational hub often to access all available resources.

## **About the Partnership**

USDA cooperators are organizations on the frontlines of access and often are the first point of contact connecting farmers to USDA programs. The partnership between FarmRaise, Inc. and FSA, through a cooperative agreement, aims to improve producer participation and customer experience in USDA programs through education and technical assistance to young, beginning, and small-scale to mid-sized producers, producers with disabilities, and veterans.

"We're thrilled to partner with our colleagues in the U.S. Department of Agriculture to drive financial access through digital education," said Jayce Hafner, the CEO of FarmRaise. "Growing up on an Angus beef cattle farm in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, my family experienced the positive impact of USDA programs on both our soil health and our balance sheet. This effort will take a team of teams, and we're eager to collaborate with cooperators to build impactful tools that will most benefit their unique missions and diverse farmer communities in the decades to come. FarmRaise aims to propel our nation's agricultural community into a transformative era of unprecedented growth, resilience and success."

By developing a digital educational hub that delivers free, user-friendly, producer and cooperator-tested resources USDA and FarmRaise, Inc. will help FSA expedite program delivery to agricultural producers. The hub offers how-to videos and visual aids that educate producers about FSA programs and prepares them for submitting applications for program participation.

## **More Information**

For more information about FSA farm and farm loan programs, visit [fsa.usda.gov](https://fsa.usda.gov) or contact your local USDA Service Center - [farmers.gov/service-center-locator](https://farmers.gov/service-center-locator). To learn more about FarmRaise, visit [Farmraise.com](https://farmraise.com).

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In the Biden-Harris administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit [usda.gov](https://usda.gov).

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