



Farm Service Agency
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Ask the Expert: A Q&A with Jayce Hafner on the new FSA Educational Hub hosted by FarmRaise

News Release | December 19, 2024

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In early 2024, USDA's [Farm Service Agency \(FSA\)](#) unveiled new online decision tools for the [Livestock Indemnity Program \(LIP\)](#) and the [Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees and Farm-raised Fish Program \(ELAP\)](#), as well as farm loan resources available to agricultural producers and cooperators who help producers access USDA disaster assistance, farm loans, and other federal farm programs. The tools and the informational resources, developed through a cooperative agreement between FarmRaise and FSA, are available at? www.farmraise.com/usda-fsa. ?

The partnership between FarmRaise, Inc. and FSA improves 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. USDA cooperators, like FarmRaise, are organizations on the frontlines of access and often are the first point of contact connecting farmers to USDA programs.

In this Ask the Expert, Jayce Hafner, FarmRaise's Chief Executive Officer, answers questions about FarmRaise, the partnership with FSA and the new FSA Educational Hub.



Jayce Hafner, Chief Executive Officer,
FarmRaise.
Photo courtesy of FarmRaise, Inc.

What is FarmRaise and what is your role within the organization?

FarmRaise is a platform designed to help farmers and ranchers access financial resources, improve business management, and streamline interactions with government programs. In addition to the FSA Educational Hub, FarmRaise offers accounting, payroll, and farm management software, as well as funding discovery tools to simplify day-to-day operations for agricultural producers. As the CEO, I lead our mission to make these resources accessible, ensuring that farmers and ranchers can efficiently manage their operations and apply for crucial funding opportunities like those provided by FSA.

Why was this partnership between the Farm Service Agency and FarmRaise created?

FSA and FarmRaise have partnered to enhance producer access to FSA programs by offering educational resources and tools that help farmers and ranchers navigate and apply for FSA farm programs and farm loan programs. This partnership is focused on reducing barriers, particularly for historically underserved producers, by simplifying and clarifying the steps needed to apply for FSA programs and set themselves up for success.

What is the FSA Educational Hub on the FarmRaise website, why was it created, and who is it designed to help?

The FSA Educational Hub is a dedicated section on the FarmRaise website designed to help agricultural producers better understand and engage with various FSA programs. It was created to build confidence in producers as they interact with FSA, and it specifically serves producers who may be unfamiliar with the application processes, including those who are historically underserved. The goal is to promote active participation in FSA programs and to ease the overall experience of applying for program benefits.

The FSA Educational Hub has two decision tools – one for the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) and one for the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees & Farm-raised Fish (ELAP). What are these tools and how do they work?

These decision tools help livestock producers quickly determine their eligibility for the LIP and ELAP programs. The tools guide users through a series of questions based on their unique circumstances, helping them understand if they qualify for these programs and what steps they need to take next, including gathering all the necessary documentation in order to apply. This streamlines the application process and removes some of the confusion that producers often face.

What resources are currently available on FarmRaise for producers considering an FSA Farm Loan?

FarmRaise offers a series of videos that help users better understand FSA farm loans and their requirements. These videos provide detailed information on preparing essential documents, such as balance sheets, which are often required for farm loan applications. By breaking down these complex steps, we aim to make the loan application process clearer and more manageable for all producers.

What else should farmers and ranchers know about the FSA Educational Hub and FSA's partnership with FarmRaise?

They should know that the FSA Educational Hub is continuously evolving to include more tools and resources that simplify their engagement with FSA programs. The FSA and FarmRaise partnership is committed to making these programs more accessible, particularly for underserved farmers and ranchers, and ensuring that all producers feel empowered to apply. With that in mind, we want to hear from farmers, ranchers, and fellow FSA cooperators to understand how we can better serve production agriculture in communities across the country!



A livestock producer uses a smartphone. USDA photo

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