



**Farm Service Agency**

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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## USDA to Issue \$1.3 Billion to Specialty Crop Producers Through Second Marketing Assistance Program Payment

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins announced a second round of payments coming soon for specialty crop producers through the Marketing Assistance for Specialty Crops (MASC) program, providing up to \$1.3 billion in additional program assistance. U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) already delivered just under \$900 million in first round payments to eligible producers.

### **About MASC**

First announced in December 2024, MASC authorized \$2 billion in Commodity Credit Corporation funds to assist specialty crop growers with rising input costs and aid in the expansion of domestic markets. In January 2025, in response to stakeholder feedback and program demand, funding for MASC was increased to \$2.65 billion. The MASC application period closed on Jan. 10, 2025.

[MASC](#) is designed to help specialty crop producers meet higher marketing costs related to:

- perishability of specialty crops like fruits, vegetables, floriculture, nursery crops and herbs;
- specialized handling and transport equipment with temperature and humidity control;
- packaging to prevent damage;
- moving perishables to market quickly; and
- higher labor costs.

MASC covers the following commercially marketed specialty crops:

- fruits (fresh, dried);
- vegetables (including dry edible beans and peas, mushrooms, and vegetable seed);
- tree nuts;
- and other specialty crops.

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## USDA Expediting \$10 Billion in Direct Economic Assistance to Agricultural Producers



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is issuing up to \$10 billion directly to agricultural producers through the Emergency Commodity Assistance Program (ECAP) for the 2024 crop year. Administered by USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA), ECAP will help agricultural producers mitigate the impacts of increased input costs and falling commodity prices.

Authorized by the American Relief Act, 2025, these economic relief payments are based on planted and prevented planted crop acres for eligible commodities for the 2024 crop year. To streamline and simplify the delivery of ECAP, FSA will begin

sending pre-filled applications to producers who submitted acreage reports to FSA for 2024 eligible ECAP commodities soon after the signup period opens on March 19, 2025. Producers do not have to wait for their pre-filled ECAP application to apply. They can visit [fsa.usda.gov/ecap](https://fsa.usda.gov/ecap) to apply using a login.gov account or contact their local FSA office to request an application once the signup period opens.

## **Eligible Commodities and Payment Rates**

The commodities below are eligible for these per-acre payment rates:

- |  |                           |
|--|---------------------------|
| • Wheat - \$30.69                                    | <b>Eligible oilseeds:</b> |
| • Corn - \$42.91                                     | • Canola – \$31.83        |
| • Sorghum - \$42.52                                  | • Crambe – \$19.08        |
| • Barley - \$21.67                                   | • Flax - \$20.97          |
| • Oats - \$77.66                                     | • Mustard - \$11.36       |
| • Upland cotton & Extra-long staple cotton - \$84.74 | • Rapeseed -\$23.63       |
| • Long & medium grain rice - \$76.94                 | • Safflower - \$26.32     |
| • Peanuts - \$75.51                                  | • Sesame - \$16.83        |
| • Soybeans - \$29.76                                 | • Sunflower – \$27.23     |
| • Dry peas - \$16.02                                 |                           |
| • Lentils - \$19.30                                  |                           |
| • Small Chickpeas - \$31.45                          |                           |
| • Large Chickpeas - \$24.02                          |                           |

## **Producer Eligibility**

Eligible producers must report 2024 crop year planted and prevented planted acres to FSA on an FSA-578, *Report of Acreage* form. Producers who have not previously reported 2024 crop year acreage or filed a notice of loss for prevented planted crops must submit an acreage report by the Aug. 15, 2025, deadline. Eligible producers can visit [fsa.usda.gov/ecap](https://fsa.usda.gov/ecap) for eligibility and payment details.

## **Applying for ECAP**

Producers must submit ECAP applications to their local FSA county office by Aug. 15, 2025. Only one application is required for all ECAP eligible commodities nationwide. ECAP applications can be submitted to FSA in-person, electronically

using [Box and One-Span](#), by fax or by applying online at [fsa.usda.gov/ecap](https://fsa.usda.gov/ecap) utilizing a secure login.gov account.

If not already on file for the 2024 crop year, producers must have the following forms on file with FSA:

- [Form AD-2047](#), *Customer Data Worksheet*.
- [Form CCC-901](#), *Member Information for Legal Entities* (if applicable).
- [Form CCC-902](#), *Farm Operating Plan* for an individual or legal entity.
- [Form CCC 943](#), *75 percent of Average Gross Income from Farming, Ranching, or Forestry Certification* (if applicable).
- [AD-1026](#), *Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELC) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification*.
- [SF-3881](#), *Direct Deposit*.

Except for the new CCC-943, most producers, especially those who have previously participated in FSA programs, likely have these forms on file. However, those who are uncertain and want to confirm the status of their forms or need to submit the new CCC-943, can contact their [local FSA county office](#).

If a producer does not receive a pre-filled ECAP application, and they planted or were prevented from planting ECAP eligible commodities in 2024, they should contact their [local FSA office](#).

### **ECAP Payments and Calculator**

ECAP payments will be issued as applications are approved. Initial ECAP payments will be factored by 85% to ensure that total program payments do not exceed available funding. If additional funds remain, FSA may issue a second payment.

ECAP assistance will be calculated using a flat payment rate for the eligible commodity multiplied by the eligible reported acres. Payments are based on acreage and not production. For acres reported as prevented plant, ECAP assistance will be calculated at 50%.

For ECAP payment estimates, producers are encouraged to visit [fsa.usda.gov/ecap](https://fsa.usda.gov/ecap) to use the ECAP online calculator.

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## **Save Time – Make an Appointment with FSA**

Producers are encouraged to call their local FSA office to schedule an appointment to ensure maximum use of their time and to make sure FSA staff is available to tend to their important business needs. Please call your local FSA office ahead to set an appointment and to discuss any records or documentation that might be needed

during your appointment. To find your local FSA office, visit [farmers.gov/working-with-us/service-center-locator](https://farmers.gov/working-with-us/service-center-locator).

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## Making Farm Reconstitutions

When changes in farm ownership or operation take place, a farm *reconstitution* is necessary. The reconstitution — or recon — is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation.

To be effective for the current fiscal year, farm combinations and farm divisions must be requested by **August 1 of the fiscal year** for farms subject to the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program. A reconstitution is considered to be requested when all of the required signatures are on FSA-155 and all other applicable documentation, such as proof of ownership, is submitted.

Total Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and non-ARC/PLC farms may be reconstituted at any time.

The following are the different methods used when doing a farm recon:

- **Estate Method** — the division of bases, allotments and quotas for a parent farm among heirs in settling an estate
- **Designation of Landowner Method** — may be used when (1) part of a farm is sold or ownership is transferred; (2) an entire farm is sold to two or more persons; (3) farm ownership is transferred to two or more persons; (4) part of a tract is sold or ownership is transferred; (5) a tract is sold to two or more persons; or (6) tract ownership is transferred to two or more persons. In order to use this method, the land sold must have been owned for at least three years, or a waiver granted, and the buyer and seller must sign a Memorandum of Understanding
- **DCP Cropland Method** — the division of bases in the same proportion that the DCP cropland for each resulting tract relates to the DCP cropland on the parent tract
- **Default Method** — the division of bases for a parent farm with each tract maintaining the bases attributed to the tract level when the reconstitution is initiated in the system.

For questions on your farm reconstitution, contact your local USDA Service Center.

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# Applying for FSA Guaranteed Loans

FSA guaranteed loans allow lenders to provide agricultural credit to farmers who do not meet the lender's normal underwriting criteria. Farmers and ranchers apply for a guaranteed loan through a lender, and the lender arranges for the guarantee. FSA can guarantee up to 95 percent of the loss of principal and interest on a loan. Guaranteed loans can be used for both farm ownership and operating purposes.

Guaranteed farm ownership loans can be used to purchase farmland, construct or repair buildings, develop farmland to promote soil and water conservation or to refinance debt.

Guaranteed operating loans can be used to purchase livestock, farm equipment, feed, seed, fuel, farm chemicals, insurance and other operating expenses.

FSA can guarantee farm ownership and operating loans up to \$2,251,000. Repayment terms vary depending on the type of loan, collateral and the producer's ability to repay the loan. Operating loans are normally repaid within seven years and farm ownership loans are not to exceed 40 years.

For more information on guaranteed loans, contact your local USDA Service Center or visit [fsa.usda.gov](https://fsa.usda.gov).

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## NRCS Celebrates 90 Years of Helping People Help the Land

On April 27, 1935, Congress established the Soil Conservation Service, which would later become the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), as a permanent agency in the U.S. Department of Agriculture. For 90 years, NRCS has helped farmers, ranchers and forestland owners make critical investments in their operations and local communities to keep working lands working and boost agricultural production, while at the same time improving the quality of our air, water, soil, and wildlife habitats.

See the NRCS compilation of videos, stories and resources [here](#).



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## Lending Rates for May

Click [here](#) for May's Lending Rates for Agriculture Producers

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## Dates to Remember

**April 15th - August 15th:** Primary Nesting Season for CRP. To stay in compliance with your CRP contract, if you need to spot mow or spot spray invasive or noxious weeds in CRP cover, please contact your local FSA Office to make a request prior to the action.

**May 15, 2025:** Acreage reporting deadline: green peas and potatoes

**May 31, 2024:** Acreage reporting deadline for nursery crops

**May 26, 2025:** Offices Closed (Memorial Day)

**June 15, 2025:** Acreage reporting deadline for tomatoes

**July 15, 2025:** Acreage reporting deadline for beans (limas only), cucumbers (Planted 4/20-6/25 in Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, and Talbot Counties), perennial forage, CRP, and all other crops.

**July 31, 2025:** Acreage reporting deadline for Hemp

**August 15, 2025:** Emergency Commodity Assistance Program (ECAP) deadline

**August 15, 2025:** Acreage reporting deadline for beans (all types except limas), cucumbers (planted 6/26-8/10 in Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, and Talbot Counties).

**September 30, 2025:** [NAP](#) coverage application closing date for value-loss crops or controlled environment crops, ornamental nursery, aquaculture, Christmas trees, ginseng, floriculture, mushrooms, and turf grass sod.

**September 30, 2025:** [NAP](#) coverage application closing date for biennial and perennial forage crops, alfalfa, grass forages, mixed forages and other forages.

**September 30, 2025:** Acreage reporting deadline- value-loss (i.e. oysters) and controlled environment crops (except nursery).

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