

Virgin Islands USDA Newsletter- June 2025

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

USVI FSA & NRCS Updates June 17, 2025

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Farm Service Agency

FSA's Customer Kiosks now Available Nationwide

The new customer kiosks from USDA's Farm Service Agency are now available at every county office nationwide. These kiosks help to streamline your visit to your local county office and easily access a variety of features such as signing FSA documents, utilizing the Loan Assistance Tool, browsing USDA programs, accessing the internet, accessing necessary personal information, and signing up for a Login.gov account, which provides access to farmers.gov level two features and other USDA and U.S. Government web resources. Future kiosk functionality enhancements include a customer check-in application, self-service option for FSA program applications and documents, financial inquiries and more.

Learn more about how FSA is modernizing our customer experience [here](#).

USDA to Provide \$1 Billion to Livestock Producers Impacted by Drought or Wildfire in 2023 and 2024

The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced the release of Congressionally mandated Emergency Livestock Relief Program (ELRP) payments to cover grazing losses due to eligible drought or wildfire events in 2023 and/or 2024.

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is leveraging existing Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) data to streamline payment calculations and expedite relief. Emergency relief payments are automatically issued for producers who have an approved LFP application on file for 2023 and/or 2024.

The *American Relief Act, 2025*, provided funds for emergency relief payments. This program is the first of two programs authorized to assist with eligible losses suffered by livestock producers. FSA will announce additional ELRP assistance for other losses authorized by the Act, including flooding, later this summer.

ELRP Eligibility

ELRP payment eligibility requires livestock producers to have suffered grazing losses in a county rated by the [U.S. Drought Monitor](#) as having a D2 (severe drought) for eight consecutive weeks or a D3 (extreme drought) or higher level of drought intensity during 2023, 2024 or both calendar years, and have applied and been approved for LFP.

Additionally, producers whose permitted grazing on federally managed lands was reduced due to wildfire are also eligible for ELRP, if they applied and were approved for LFP in 2023, 2024 or both calendar years.

To streamline and simplify the delivery of ELRP benefits, producers are not required to submit an application for payment; however, they must have the following forms on file with FSA:

- CCC-853, *Livestock Forage Disaster Program Application*
- [Form AD-2047](#), *Customer Data Worksheet*.
- [Form CCC-902](#), *Farm Operating Plan* for an individual or legal entity.
- [Form CCC-901](#), *Member Information for Legal Entities* (if applicable).
- Form FSA-510, *Request for an Exception to the \$125,000 Payment Limitation for Certain Programs* (if applicable). This form is required to be on file for both 2023 and 2024 to be eligible for the payment limitation exception.
- [SF-3881](#), *Direct Deposit*.

- [AD-1026](#), *Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELC) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification*.

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, can contact their [local FSA county office](#).

ELRP Payment Calculation

To expedite payments to eligible livestock producers, determine eligibility, and calculate an ELRP payment, FSA uses livestock inventories and drought-affected forage acreage or restricted animal units and grazing days due to wildfire already reported by the producer on the CCC-853, *Livestock Forage Disaster Program Application* form, for 2023, 2024 or both calendar years.

ELRP payments will be equal to the eligible livestock producer's gross LFP calculated payment for the calendar year multiplied by an ELRP 2023 or 2024 payment factor to determine the total gross ELRP payments for 2023 and/or 2024. The initial payment factor for 2023 and 2024 ELRP payments is 35%. If additional funds remain, FSA may issue a second payment.

Supplemental Disaster Assistance Timeline

USDA is fully committed to expediting remaining disaster assistance provided by the *American Relief Act, 2025*. On May 7, we launched our [2023/2024 Supplemental Disaster Assistance public landing page](#) where the status of USDA disaster assistance and block grant rollout timeline can be tracked. The page is updated regularly and accessible through fsa.usda.gov.

The Act also authorized \$10 billion in economic loss assistance to producers of covered commodities based on 2024 planted and prevented planted acres. To date, USDA has delivered more than \$7.7 billion to producers through the [Emergency Commodity Assistance Program \(ECAP\)](#). The ECAP deadline is Aug. 15, 2025. Contact your local FSA county office for information.

To learn more visit the [ELRP website](#).

USDA Microloans Help Farmers Purchase Farmland and Improve Property

Farmers can use USDA farm ownership microloans to buy and improve property. These microloans are especially helpful to beginning or underserved farmers, U.S. veterans looking for a career in farming, and those who have small and mid-sized farming operations. Microloans have helped farmers and ranchers with operating costs, such as feed, fertilizer, tools, fencing, equipment, and living expenses since 2013.

Microloans can also help with farmland and building purchases and soil and water conservation improvements. FSA designed the expanded program to simplify the application process, expand eligibility requirements and expedite smaller real estate loans to help farmers strengthen their operations. Microloans provide up to \$50,000 to qualified producers and can be issued to the applicant directly from the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA).

To learn more about the FSA microloan program, contact your St. Croix County USDA Service Center at 340-773-9146 or visit fsa.usda.gov/microloans.

Selected Interest Rates for June 2025

Farm Operating - Direct	5.000%
Farm Operating - Microloan	5.000%
Farm Ownership - Direct	5.750%
Farm Ownership - Microloan	5.750%
Farm Ownership - Direct, Joint Financing	3.750%
Farm Ownership - Down Payment	1.750%
Emergency Loan - Amount of Actual Loss	3.750%

Natural Resources Conservation Service

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 our compilation of videos, stories and resources [here](#).

Every Successful Farm Starts with a Plan

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) works to help farmers, ranchers and forest landowners invest in their operations and local communities to keep working lands working, boost rural economies, increase the competitiveness of American agriculture and improve the quality of our air, water, soil and wildlife habitat.

Simply put – NRCS helps America’s farmers, ranchers and forestland owners make conservation work for them.

Our Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) program enables every acre of voluntary conservation applied through every program NRCS administers. It is the foundation of our financial and technical assistance delivery system.

Every farm and acre is unique and requires tailored management; and every decision maker has different management concerns and needs. Our technical assistance is one-on-one, personalized advice and support to help producers make the best decisions for their lands – and is offered free of charge.

This personalized assistance provides producers with the science-based data and tools to make informed decisions about where to target efforts to get the greatest return on their investment and ensure the long-term sustainability of American agriculture.

A comprehensive conservation plan is the first step to managing all the natural resources on a farm. NRCS walks the farm with the producer and develops options to address that producer’s needs. Our toolbox includes aerial photos, soil surveys, engineering solutions and individual science-based analysis customized for the producer’s property. The plan we develop with the producer combines existing production methods with recommended conservation practices to

best manage that farm's unique natural resources, while allowing the producer to grow sustainably and productively. Supported by our expert analysis and recommendations, the producer chooses which option best meets their needs. These decisions become the producer's conservation plan, a step-by-step guide to reach their objectives.

This planning process also makes it easier to identify how and when the farmer, rancher or forest landowner could qualify for Farm Bill financial assistance to help them install conservation systems or receive incentives for trying new ones. We have the expertise to see our customers through this process. Because identifying when, where and how to implement practices is not plug and play.

The final plan provides a roadmap for the producer to meet their natural resource conservation goals. It includes helpful information on each of the producer's practices, such as how they benefit the farm, how to maintain them, and how they help the soil, water and wildlife.

By developing a conservation plan and adding conservation to the land, farmers, ranchers and forest landowners can protect the land's ability to provide for their family and future generations.

With offices in communities nationwide, NRCS staff provide the information, tools and delivery systems necessary for producers – in every state and territory – to conserve, maintain and improve their natural resources.

Contact your local [USDA service center](#) to find out more.



USDA St. Croix Service Center

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