

In This Issue:

- [USDA Announces Signup for 2023 Assistance for On-Farm Food Safety Expenses for Specialty Crop Growers](#)
- [Additional January 30th & 31st Deadlines](#)

USDA Announces Signup for 2023 Assistance for On-Farm Food Safety Expenses for Specialty Crop Growers

Deadline for Calendar Year 2022 Applications is January 31, 2023

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) reminds specialty crop producers of available assistance to help cover certain costs of complying with regulatory and market-driven food safety certification requirements. Applications for the Food Safety Certification for Specialty Crops (FSCSC) program for eligible 2022 costs are due by Jan. 31, 2023. USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) will accept applications for 2023 costs from Feb. 1, 2023, to Jan. 31, 2024.

FSA is making available up to \$200 million through the FSCSC program, which is part of USDA's broader effort to transform the food system to create a more level playing field for small-scale agricultural operations and a more balanced, equitable economy for everyone working in food and agriculture.

USDA first announced and opened this program for signup in 2022, delivering critical assistance for specialty crop operations, with an emphasis on equity in program delivery while building on lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and supply chain disruptions.

Program Details

FSCSC assists specialty crop operations that incurred eligible on-farm food safety certification and expenses related to obtaining or renewing a food safety certification in calendar years 2022 and 2023 for certifications issued on or after June 21, 2022. For each year, FSCSC covers a percentage of the specialty crop operation's eligible costs of obtaining or renewing their certification, as well as a portion of their related expenses.

To be eligible for FSCSC, the applicant must:

- Be a specialty crop operation.
- Meet the definition of a small business or very small business.
- Have paid eligible expenses related to certification.

Specialty crop operations may receive assistance for the following costs:

- Developing a food safety plan for first-time food safety certification.
- Maintaining or updating an existing food safety plan.
- Food safety certification.
- Certification upload fees.
- Microbiological testing for products, soil amendments and water.
- Training

FSA calculates FSCSC payments for each category of eligible costs. FSA set a higher payment rate for underserved farmers and ranchers, which includes socially disadvantaged, limited resource, beginning and veteran producers who have a CCC-860 on file with FSA.

FSA will issue payments at the time of application approval for 2022 and after the application period ends for 2023. The 2023 application period opens Feb. 1, 2023, and closes Jan. 31, 2024. If calculated payments exceed the amount of available funding, payments will be prorated.

Applying for Assistance

Interested specialty crop producers can apply by completing the application, [FSA-888](#). The application, along with other required documents, can be submitted to the FSA office at any USDA Service Center nationwide by mail, fax, hand delivery or via electronic means. Producers can visit farmers.gov/service-locator to find their local FSA office. Specialty crop producers can also call 877-508-8364 to speak directly with a USDA employee ready to assist.

Producers can visit farmers.gov/food-safety for additional program details, eligibility information and forms needed to apply.

Additional January 30th & 31st Deadlines

[2023 Indiana FSA Important Deadline Dates](#)

January 30 – Final Date to Submit Application for Payment for 2022 Losses under [Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program \(ELAP\)](#)

January 30 – Final Date to Submit Application for Payment for 2022 Losses under [Livestock Forage Program \(LFP\)](#)

January 31 – Deadline to Apply for [Loan Deficiency Payments \(LDP\) for Unshorn Pelts](#) Produced During the 2022 Crop Year

January 31 - Signup Deadline for 2023 [Dairy Margin Coverage and Supplemental Dairy Margin Coverage](#)

January 31 - Deadline to Submit an Application for the [Food Safety Certification for Specialty Crops \(FSCSC\)](#) Program for 2022

Indiana Farm Service Agency

5981 Lakeside Blvd
Indianapolis IN 46278

Phone: 317-290-3315
Fax: 855-374-4066

USDA Service Center Locator

Julia A Wickard
State Executive Director
julia.wickard@usda.gov

Joshua Oren
Administrative Officer
joshua.oren@usda.gov

Kala Nicholson-Cline
Farm Loan
Program Chief
kala.nicholson-cline@usda.gov

Susan Houston
Price Support/Disaster
Program Chief
susan.houston@usda.gov

Jared Thomas
Conservation/Compliance
Program Chief
jared.thomas@usda.gov

Kaitlin Myers
Production Adjustment
Program Chief
kaitlin.myers@usda.gov

Indiana FSA State Committee

Travis Nolcox, Gibson County - Chairman
Amanda Berenda, Newton County
Joe Pearson, Grant County
Beth Tharp, Putnam County
Emily Wilson, Decatur County

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).