



## Sherman County USDA Service Center Moves to New Location

The Sherman County USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) is relocating to **2004 1st Street, Moro, OR 97039**.

The phone number for the office remains **541-298-8559** until further notice. Office hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

For more information contact the Sherman County FSA Office at **541-298-8559**.



## FSA USDA's Conservation Reserve Program Pays More Than \$1.77 Billion to America's Producers in Support of Conservation and Climate-Smart Agricultures Accepting CRP Continuous Enrollment Offers



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has issued more than \$1.77 billion this year to agricultural producers and landowners through its Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), a critical piece of the Department's efforts to support climate-smart agriculture and forestry on working lands. This year, CRP's more than 667,000 participants received payments from USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) for their voluntary conservation efforts on more than 23 million acres of private land. Since 2021, CRP has grown by 21% in terms of acres enrolled,

testament to the Biden-Harris administration's program improvement efforts.

## **Top five states for CRP participant payments:**

- Iowa, \$402,508,900
- Illinois, \$172,723,800
- Minnesota, \$150,773,400
- South Dakota, \$129,545,200
- Missouri, \$99,849,600

## **Improvements to CRP**

Since 2021, FSA has made improvements to the program:

- Introducing a new climate-smart practice incentive for CRP general and continuous signups designed to reward participants who implement conservation practices that increase carbon sequestration and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Enabling additional soil rental rate adjustments or rate flexibilities, including a possible increase in rates where appropriate.
- Increasing payments for practice incentives from 20% to 50%. This incentive, in addition to cost share payments, for continuous CRP practices is based on establishment cost.
- Increasing payments for water quality practices rates from 10% to 20% for certain water quality benefiting practices available through the CRP continuous signup, such as grassed waterways, riparian buffers and filter strips.
- Establishing a Grassland CRP minimum rental rate benefitting more than 1,000 counties with rates currently below the \$13 minimum.

Additionally, FSA made significant improvements to the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) that reduce barriers by making the partnership program more accessible to a broader cross-section of agricultural producers and new conservation partners. These program improvements include the flexibility for partners to provide matching funds in the form of cash, in-kind contributions, or technical assistance and the ability for FSA to invest in additional, full-time staff devoted to working directly with our CREP partners and program specialists in FSA's state offices.

Since 2021, FSA has also entered into the first-ever Tribal Nations CREP agreements in partnership with the Cheyenne River, Rosebud, and Oglala Sioux Tribes. And in 2022, USDA entered into the Big Sioux River Watershed CREP agreement with the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish & Parks to assist farmers, ranchers and agricultural landowners to

improve water quality, reduce soil erosion, enhance wildlife habitat, and create public hunting and fishing access. These CREP agreements reflect priorities and goals of USDA to broaden the scope and reach of its voluntary, incentive-based conservation programs to engage underserved producers.

FSA's conservation programs had a strong showing in 2023. FSA partnered with producers and landowners to enroll 3.9 million CRP this year –including 927,000 enrolled acres through General CRP, 2.3 million acres enrolled in Grassland CRP and 694,000 acres enrolled in Continuous CRP. These results underscore the continued importance of

CRP as a tool to help producers invest in the long-term health, sustainability, and profitability of their land and natural resources.

### **More Information**

CRP is a voluntary program contract with agricultural producers through which environmentally sensitive agricultural land is devoted to conservation benefits. CRP participants establish long-term, resource-conserving plant species, such as approved grasses or trees to control soil erosion, improve water quality and develop wildlife habitat. In return, FSA provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. Contract duration is between 10 and 15 years.

To learn more about CRP and other FSA programs, producers can contact their local USDA Service Center.

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## **USDA Reminds Producers of Continuous Certification Option for Perennial Forage**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) reminds agricultural producers with perennial forage crops of an option to report their acreage once, without having to report that acreage in subsequent years, as long as there are no applicable changes on the farm. Interested producers can select the continuous certification option after USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) certifies their acreage report.



An acreage report documents a crop grown on a farm or ranch and its intended uses, including perennial crops like mixed forage, birdsfoot trefoil, chicory/radicchio, kochia (prostrata), lespedeza, perennial peanuts and perennial grass varieties. To access many USDA programs, producers must file an accurate and timely acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planting acreage.

The perennial crop continuous certification process requires a producer to initially complete an acreage report certifying the perennial crop acreage. The producer may select the continuous certification option any time after the crop is certified. Once the continuous certification option is selected, the certified acreage will roll forward annually and does not require additional action on the producer's part in subsequent years unless the acreage report changes.

Once a producer selects continuous certification, then continuous certification is applicable to all fields on the farm for the specific crop, crop type and intended use. If continuous certification is selected by any producers sharing in the crop, then the continuous certification is applicable to fields in which the producer has a share for the specific crop, crop type and intended use.

Producers can opt out of continuous certification at any time. The continuous certification will terminate automatically if a change in the farming operation occurs.

## How to File a Report

To file a crop acreage report, producers need to provide:

- Crop and crop type or variety.
- Intended use of the crop.
- Number of acres of the crop.
- Map with approximate boundaries for the crop.
- Planting date(s).
- Planting pattern, when applicable.
- Producer shares.
- Irrigation practice(s).
- Acreage prevented from planting, when applicable.
- Other information as required.

## More Information

Producers can contact their local FSA office to see if their crops are eligible for continuous certification or to make an appointment. Producers can make an appointment to report acres by contacting their local [USDA Service Center](#).

## Policy Updates for Acreage Reporting

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) recently made several policy updates for acreage reporting for cover crops, revising intended use, late-filed provisions, grazing allotments as well as updated the definitions of “idle” and “fallow.”

### Reporting Cover Crops:

Cover crop types can be chosen from the following four categories:

- **Cereals and other grasses**
- **Legumes**
- **Brassicas and other broadleaves**
- **Mixtures**

If the cover crop is harvested for any use other than forage or grazing and is not terminated according to policy guidelines, then that crop will no longer be considered a cover crop, and the acreage report must be revised to reflect the actual crop.

### Permitted Revision of Intended use After Acreage Reporting Date:

New operators or owners who pick up a farm after the acreage reporting deadline has passed and the crop has already been reported on the farm, have 30 calendar days from the date when the new operator or owner acquired the lease on land, control of the land or ownership and new producer crop share interest in the previously reported crop acreage. Under this policy, appropriate documentation must be provided to the County Committee's

satisfaction to determine that a legitimate operator or ownership and producer crop share interest change occurred to permit the revision.

**Acreage Reports:**

In order to maintain program eligibility and benefits, you must timely file acreage reports. Failure to file an acreage report by the crop acreage reporting deadline may result in ineligibility for future program benefits. FSA will not accept acreage reports provided more than a year after the acreage reporting deadline.

**Reporting Grazing Allotments:**

FSA offices can now accept acreage reports for grazing allotments. You will use form “FSA-578” to report grazing allotments as animal unit months (AUMs) using the “Reporting Unit” field. Your local FSA office will need the grazing period start and end date and the percent of public land.

**Definitions of Terms**

FSA defines “idle” as cropland or a balance of cropland within a Common Land Unit (CLU) (field/subfield) which is not planted or considered not planted and does not meet the definition of fallow or skip row.

Fallow is considered unplanted cropland acres which are part of a crop/fallow rotation where cultivated land that is normally planted is purposely kept out of production during a regular growing season.

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

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**Ballots for County Committee Elections will be mailed November 6, 2023**

# 2023 COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTIONS



**JUN. 15, 2023**  
Beginning of nomination period. Forms available at [fsa.usda.gov/elections](https://fsa.usda.gov/elections).



**AUG. 1, 2023**  
Last day to file nomination forms at the local FSA county office.



**NOV. 6, 2023**  
Ballots mailed to eligible voters.



**DEC. 4, 2023**  
Last day to return voted ballots to the local FSA county office.



**JAN. 1, 2024**  
Newly elected county committee members take office.



## BE THE LINK

between your agricultural community and the USDA

June 2023 | USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

The last day to return voted ballots is **December 4, 2023**.

For more information please see the [County Committee website](#) or contact your local [USDA Service Center](#).

# 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 local county [USDA Service Center](#) or visit [fsa.usda.gov/microloans](https://fsa.usda.gov/microloans).

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## Farm Loan Interest Rates - October 2023

Farm Operating - Direct	5.250%
Farm Operating - Microloan	5.250%
Farm Ownership - Direct	5.250%
Farm Ownership - Microloan	5.250%
Farm Ownership - Direct, Joint Financing	3.250%
Farm Ownership - Down Payment	1.500%
Emergency Loan - Amount of Actual Loss	3.750%

**Effective as of October 1, 2023**

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## Are you an Urban Producer interested in FSA's new Urban Agricultural Initiative?



## Contact Oregon's Urban Agriculture CED today!

Amanda Welker, Urban Agriculture CED

[Amanda.Welker3@usda.gov](mailto:Amanda.Welker3@usda.gov)

503-210-6037

22055 S. Beaver Creek Rd. Suite 2

Beaver Creek, Oregon 97004



7620 SW Mohawk St.  
Tualatin, Oregon 97062  
Phone: 503-692-3688 Fax: 855-824-6185

How can we help you? Submit questions or requests for further information to [ASK.USDA.GOV](http://ASK.USDA.GOV) or 1-833-ONE-USDA.



Sign up for important text message alerts from your local county FSA office!  
To subscribe, text FSNOW (372-669).