

Start Here!

A farmer/rancher's guide to accessing government programs.

Background Information:

Federal funding is available to help agricultural producers transition to an organic system of production! As part of the larger \$300 million USDA Organic Transition Initiative, the Transition to Organic Partnership Program (TOPP) aims to help producers adopt organic management systems in pursuit of certification.

Program Highlight: Government Assistance

The Organic Farming Research Foundation (OFRF) has made a series of guides to help farmers and ranchers access government programs, but with so many programs, it can be hard to know where to start! This flyer will walk you through your options and help you find the right support for your operation.

What kind of support are you looking for?

Accessing Funding

I am looking for financial support for my farming operation.

Organic Certification

I am pursuing or maintaining USDA organic certification.

Conservation Practices

I am looking to strengthen the environmental health of my farm.

Research Support

I am interested in doing research on my farm.

Tip: Get into the System!

Most government assistance programs require you to have an account with farmers.gov. The sooner your farm is verified and in the system, the sooner you can begin accessing USDA resources.

Viewing a printed version of this document? A PDF version with hyperlinks, along with other resources on other programs that support organic production, is available here: www.ofrf.org/resources/topp/



**TRANSITION TO ORGANIC
PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM**

Accessing Funding

Farm Service Agency (FSA) Loans

Who: Farmers and ranchers.

What: Low-interest loans covering a variety of farm operating costs and circumstances.

When: Applications are open year-round.

How to Apply: Applications are submitted through your local FSA office. [Learn more.](#)

 **Looking for farm insurance?** The Whole Farm Revenue Program (WFRP) offers options for diverse and small-scale farming operations. [Learn more.](#)

Organic Certification

Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP)

Who: Certified organic producers.

What: Up to \$750 to cover costs associated with certification.

When: Applications are generally due at the end of the calendar year.

How to Apply: Applications are submitted through your local FSA office, or state agency, if they offer the program. [Learn more.](#)

Conservation Practices

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

Who: Agricultural producers, private forest-owners, federally recognized tribes, and water-management entities.

What: Technical assistance and cost-share for projects/infrastructure addressing natural resource concerns.

When: Applications are accepted continuously, with a batching deadline at the beginning of the calendar year

How to Apply: Applications are submitted through your local NRCS office. [Learn more.](#)

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

Who: Agricultural producers, private forest-owners, and federally-recognized tribes.

What: Technical and financial assistance (up to \$4,000 per year) for implementing on-going conservation practices.

When: Applications are accepted continuously, with a batching deadline at the beginning of the calendar year.

How to Apply: Applications are submitted through your local NRCS office. [Learn more.](#)

 **NRCS and Organic Certification** To make sure your conservation practices are in compliance with organic certification requirements, check out our [Organic Transition Initiative \(OTI\)](#) and [Tech Note 12](#) guides.

Research Support

Sustainable Agriculture Research Education (SARE) Farmer/Rancher Grants

Who: Commercial farmers and ranchers.

What: Financial assistance (between \$15,000–35,000; varies regionally) for a farm research project.

When: Applications vary by region between early fall and late winter.

How to Apply: Applications are submitted through the SARE portal. [Learn more.](#)

 **Get Started with On-Farm Research** If you're interested in introducing more structured trials on your farm, check out OFRF's [Farmers Guide to Conducting On-Farm Research.](#)