

Funding Available for Organic Farmers

Farm Service Agency (FSA) Loans










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: Farm Service Agency (FSA) Loans

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) is a crucial financing resource for farmers. It can help guarantee loans made by commercial lenders or issue direct loans to farmers when they cannot access credit or favorable terms and rates from a bank. The FSA can also be the “Lender of First Opportunity” for beginning farmers.

Loan Types

-  **Operating Loans**. Short-term financing for the everyday costs of starting, maintaining, and strengthening a farm or ranch.
-  **Farm Ownership Loans**. Long-term financing to buy, expand, or improve a farm or ranch.
-  **Climate-Smart Agriculture Farm Loans**. Financing specifically for organic-aligned practices and equipment that reduce environmental impact. Site under review as of 5/20/2025.
-  **Emergency Loans**. Loans to aid farmers who have been impacted by a federally declared natural disaster or national emergency.
-  **Youth Loans**. Small loans for young people (14–20 years old) for projects in connection with 4-H clubs, FFA, Tribal youth groups, or similar agricultural youth organizations.
-  **Operating and Farm Ownership Loans for Beginning Farmers and Ranchers**. Loans with more favorable terms specifically for farmers new to the industry.
-  **Indian Land Acquisition Program**. For federally recognized Indigenous farmers and tribal members looking to purchase land within their reservation boundaries for agricultural use.
-  **Highly Fractionated Indian Land Loan Program (HFIL)**. For tribal members and entities looking to purchase or consolidate reservation land for agricultural use.
-  **Microloans**. Microloans are for small, beginning farmers, niche, and non-traditional farm operations that may not qualify for or need a full FSA loan.



TRANSITION TO ORGANIC PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

What FSA loan is right for me?

Need financing for your farm? FSA offers low-interest loans directly to farmers, and can also help you secure better rates through a commercial lender. Whether you're just starting out or looking to grow your farm, there's likely an FSA loan designed for your situation. Use their free [Loan Assistance Tool](#) to get a head start on finding the right loan for you.

How can you apply for FSA loans?

1 Find your local FSA office.
All FSA loans, whether direct or guaranteed, are processed through your local FSA county office. [Find your local office here: https://www.fsa.usda.gov/state-offices](https://www.fsa.usda.gov/state-offices)

2 Schedule a meeting.
Call or visit your local office to discuss which loan type fits your situation. Bring any records you have about your farm operation, finances, and land.

3 Gather your documents.
Your loan officer will tell you exactly what's needed, but commonly required documents include:

- ☀ Government-issued ID
- ☀ Tax returns (typically 3 years)
- ☀ Farm financial statements or records
- ☀ Proof of land ownership or lease agreement
- ☀ Business plan (see above)
- ☀ Organic certification or transition plan, if applicable

4 Submit your application.
Applications can be submitted directly through FSA or, for guaranteed loans, through a commercial lender. Your loan officer will guide you through this.

- ☀ [Apply directly with FSA.](#)
- ☀ [Apply with a commercial lender guaranteed by FSA.](#)

5 Follow up.
Processing times vary by loan type. Stay in contact with your loan officer and respond quickly to any requests for additional information.

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