

Crop Acreage Reporting

What You Need to Know



Overview

Agricultural producers should file crop acreage reports with USDA that document the crops grown on your farm or ranch and their intended uses.

Each year, USDA agencies collect data relating to crops through crop acreage reports. If you want to participate in many USDA programs, including crop insurance, safety net, conservation, and disaster assistance programs, you must file timely acreage reports to remain eligible for program benefits. Filing an accurate and timely acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planted acreage, may prevent the loss of benefits.

Deadlines

Deadlines to file crop acreage reports vary by crop and by state and county.

Farm Service Agency staff at your local USDA Service Center can help by providing you with maps and acreage reporting deadlines by crop for your county. Your crop insurance agent can assist you with reporting information necessary for crop insurance benefits.

How it Works

You can file crop acreage reports by filling out the FSA-578 form. Your local USDA service center staff can help by providing you with maps and deadlines to simplify the reporting process. Producers can also use USDA's self-service portal, farmers.gov to securely view or print maps. To enroll in the online service, contact your local FSA office or visit farmers.gov/sign-in.

To file an acreage report, you need:

- 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 dates
- Planting pattern, when applicable
- Producer shares
- Irrigation practice(s)
- Acreage prevented from planting, when applicable
- Other information as required

Reporting dates vary by crop and by county. Ask your local FSA staff for details.



Find your Local Office

To find your local office, go to: farmers.gov/service-locator

Crop Acreage Reporting Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How are crop acreage reports used?

The data collected from crop acreage reports is used to:

- determine compliance with USDA farm programs
- determine the amount of insurance provided and the premium charged
- verify compliance with Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation provisions
- inform USDA agency program decisions
- determine producer eligibility for commodity loans and loan deficiency payments
- determine crop and producer eligibility for participation in certain USDA programs

Q: How often do I need to report my crop acreage?

Producers must generally certify acreage reports after each planting as some crops have multiple plantings and each planting must be reported.

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Some crops are eligible for continuous certification. This means after a crop is reported once, the certification remains in effect until a change is made. Check with your local USDA Service Center's FSA office to see if your crops are eligible for continuous certification.

Q: I'm a beginning farmer. How do I report crop acres my first year?

If this is your first year farming a tract of land, make sure you have a farm number, that your tract information is current, and that you are in FSA's system. To get a farm number, bring proof of identity, a copy of your deed or leasing documents, and any entity documentation for your business (limited partnership, estate, or trust documents) to your local USDA Service Center. We're here to help you get started!

Q: Do I need an appointment?

Please contact your local FSA office to schedule a phone or virtual appointment.

Q: I have a small operation. Do I still need to report crop acres?

Yes. FSA works with farms and ranches of all sizes. Small farmers should still report their acreage because they may be eligible for assistance in the event of a natural disaster.

Q: Can I report cover crops?

Yes. Crops that are used for erosion control, soil health, or water quality can be reported as cover crops. However, if a cover crop is harvested for anything other than forage or grazing, it's no longer a cover crop and the report must be revised.

Q: What if my crops are organic?

Crops aren't required to be reported as organic, but if you choose to do so you should bring your current organic plan and documentation verifying the certified organic status of your crops.

Q: If I already reported my acres to my crop insurance agency, do I still need to submit a report to FSA?

Yes. FSA and participating insurance providers approved by the Risk Management Agency (RMA) can provide the common information from their acreage reports at one office and the information will be electronically shared with the other location. However, producers must still sign reports for both FSA and the insurance provider.



Q: When should I report prevented planted and failed acres?

Many programs require that prevented planted and failed acres be reported within 15 days of the disaster.

Q: What happens if the acreage reporting deadline for my county has passed? Can I still file?

Yes. Acreage reports can be filed up to a year after the deadline has passed. Acreage reporting establishes your eligibility for many programs including disaster programs. Even if there is no program payment that might be at issue when an acreage report could be filed or filed late with a fee, we encourage producers to file an acreage report and remit the late-file fee rather than to choose not to report the acreage.

Sometimes program or payment eligibility decisions or application deadlines extend beyond the final date when a late-filed acreage report can be filed. In this case, electing not to file and paying a fee could be final with regard to the potential eligibility of those acres and producers sharing in the acres.

Having an acreage report on file helps ensure eligibility for payments and disaster assistance, especially unforeseen future disasters or program payment eligibility.