



United States Department of Agriculture

# YOUR NEXT MISSION: AGRICULTURE



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Are you thinking about pursuing a post-service career in agriculture?

As a military veteran, your leadership training, skills, and perspective can help keep America's food supply safe and secure, strengthen rural and urban communities, and restore and conserve the environment.

Whether you are returning home or looking to start a new career in agriculture, USDA can help get you started and achieve success.

## EMPLOYMENT

### WORK AT USDA

The USDA's agencies provide public service in many areas – from food safety to research, forest management to nutrition, farm loans, marketing and trade, insurance and rural development.

The USDA is actively hiring veterans in our 2,100 offices nationwide and at our headquarters. Veterans may qualify for preferences and hiring authorities that enhance their job search.

Contact USDA at [veterans@usda.gov](mailto:veterans@usda.gov) to learn how to match your skills with USDA agencies and offices.



## NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIPS

USDA and the Department of Labor offer apprenticeships to help you earn wages and gain experience. As an Agricultural Commodity Grader, you take part in a 12-month training program, getting paid while learning how to inspect, grade, and certify fruits, vegetables and specialty crops. As a Wildland Firefighter, you get receive 3,000 hours of paid on-the-job training with USDA Forest Service. USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) apprenticeship will provide veterans with new skills and tools so that they may be better integrated into the Federal civilian workforce, the program will also create a pipeline of candidates with previous food safety military experience to fill food inspection positions. Learn more about these and other apprenticeships at [www.dol.gov/apprenticeship](http://www.dol.gov/apprenticeship).

## CAREERS IN AGRICULTURE

Careers in agriculture are diverse, rewarding, and in demand. Did you know that there are more than 200 career options in agricultural research, production, processing, and distribution?



Not just farming and ranching, but also accounting, IT, marketing, crop grading, food safety inspection, firefighting, research, and much more. All these jobs help keep farms and our food system running.

- Learn more at [www.usda.gov/veterans](http://www.usda.gov/veterans)
- Questions? Contact us at [veterans@usda.gov](mailto:veterans@usda.gov)

## EDUCATION

Ag experts are in high demand. According to a Purdue University study, thousands of jobs in agriculture go unfilled because there aren't enough graduates with expertise in food, agriculture, renewable natural resources, or the environment. These job opportunities are expected to grow. Veterans can fill this need with certifications, a bachelor's degree or higher in food science, precision agriculture, veterinary medicine, water resources science and engineering, sustainable agriculture, and more.

### LAND-GRANT UNIVERSITIES AND EXTENSION

More than 100 land-grant colleges and universities nationwide train the next generation of agricultural professionals. These institutions also host Extension agents and offices that provide training and informal education to agricultural professionals and local communities.

USDA also offers many scholarship programs and support for students attending Hispanic-serving colleges and universities, historically black colleges and universities, and Tribal land-grant colleges and universities.

USDA Land Grant Universities: <https://nifa.usda.gov/land-grant-colleges-and-universities-partner-website-directory>

### USDA INTERNSHIP AND CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Internships: [www.usda.gov/youth/career](http://www.usda.gov/youth/career)

Careers at USDA: [www.usda.gov/our-agency/careers](http://www.usda.gov/our-agency/careers)



## PARTNERSHIPS AND NETWORKS

- The Farmer Veteran Coalition provides direct assistance to veterans in their beginning years of farming or ranching. [www.farmvetco.org](http://www.farmvetco.org)
- AgrAbility helps people with disability (including veterans) enter and remain in farming and ranching. [www.agrability.org](http://www.agrability.org)
- The Armed to Farm program offers conferences and training workshops for military veterans. [www.ncat.org/armedtofarm/](http://www.ncat.org/armedtofarm/)

## SUPPORT FOR MILITARY FAMILIES

USDA offers many programs and public-private partnerships to help veterans and their families thrive. Visit [www.usda.gov/veterans](http://www.usda.gov/veterans) to connect with these resources.

- Nutrition benefits and programs
- Education and training benefits
- Loans and grants for businesses and community facilities
- Housing loans and rental assistance
- On-base support for health and wellness, family dynamics, and communication
- 4-H clubs that offer educational activities for military youth

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# ENTREPRENEURSHIP

## FARMING AND RANCHING

USDA can help veterans transition into farming, ranching, and other agricultural opportunities by connecting you with financial, educational and training resources, and business planning support.

USDA's Discovery Tool can help you identify which programs might be right for you. Visit [newfarmers.usda.gov/discovery](http://newfarmers.usda.gov/discovery) to learn more.

## START A RURAL BUSINESS

For veterans who want to start or grow a business, USDA's Rural Development offers more than 40 loan, grant, and technical assistance programs to help you purchase land, equipment, or supplies, refinance, or support energy efficiency improvements. Other USDA loans and grants help entrepreneurs buy, build, or improve community facilities, such as health clinics, schools, and firehouses. Learn more at [www.rd.usda.gov](http://www.rd.usda.gov)

## VISIT A LOCAL USDA SERVICE CENTER

New farmers can visit their local USDA service center for loans and technical assistance. USDA has service centers around the country ready to serve you. Visit [www.farmers.gov](http://www.farmers.gov) to find a USDA center near you and speak to a USDA representative about farming and USDA programs.

Learn more at [www.usda.gov/veterans](http://www.usda.gov/veterans)

Questions? Contact us at [veterans@usda.gov](mailto:veterans@usda.gov)

# USDA MILITARY VETERANS AGRICULTURAL LIAISON

The USDA Military Veterans Agricultural Liaison was created by the 2014 Farm Bill to coordinate USDA activities and provide information, resources, and support for active duty military and veterans interested in agriculture. Housed in USDA's Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement, MVAL activities include:

- Establishing formal collaborations between USDA, other federal agencies, and nonprofits to better serve veterans.
- Offering information on special hiring authorities for veterans and their family members, veterans' preference, and advice for employment at USDA agencies and offices.
- Representing USDA at hiring fairs, in partnership with other federal agencies, nonprofits, and private corporations to encourage veteran employment.

Learn more at [www.usda.gov/veterans](http://www.usda.gov/veterans)

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## United States Department of Agriculture



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