LOCAL TO NATIONAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

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Local to National Funding Opportunities

Image credit: macrovector
Traditional Bank Loans

Local Bank

If you have a long-standing history in your community and have done business with a local lender your bank is a good place to start.

Farm Credit

supports rural communities and agriculture by serving every part of agriculture from the smallest operations to the largest.

Farm Credit by the Numbers

- 604,700+ Farm Credit customers nationwide
- $14.9 B New loans to small farmers and ranchers
- 976,625 Loans as of December 31, 2033
- $398.2 B Total loan volume as of December 31, 2033

Source: farmcredit.com/about
Types of Loans

- Farm ownership
- Operating loans
- Microloans
- Direct and Guaranteed

Resource

- Loans for Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Fact Sheet
- USDA FSA website
- County FSA office
Beginning farmers are defined as an individuals/entity who

- Who has not operated a farm for more than 10 years.
- Substantially participates in the operation.

For farm ownership loans

- The applicant cannot own greater than 30% of the average size farm in the county.

If the applicant is an entity

- All members must be related by blood or marriage and an eligible beginning farmer.

USDA FSA
Farm Loans

Overview
The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Farm Service Agency (USDA) offers direct and guaranteed loans to farmers and ranchers to promote, build, and sustain farms for a thriving agricultural economy.

Farm Ownership Loans
- Max. direct loan amount: $600,000 (IR of 5.250%)
- Max. guaranteed loan amount: $2,236,000
- Max repayment (both): 40 years

Farm Operation Loans
- Max direct loan amount: $400,000 (IR of 4.875%)
- Max. guaranteed loan amount: $2,236,000
- Max repayment (both): 12 years or when the commodities produced are sold

"The USDA FSA offers direct and guaranteed loan to farmers and ranchers to promote, build, and sustain farms for a thriving agricultural economy."

Guaranteed Farm Loans
- Guaranteed loans are available to farmers who cannot obtain sufficient financing from a commercial lender. Guaranteed loans are made and serviced by commercial lenders, such as banks, Farm Credit System Institutions, or credit unions. Under a guaranteed loan, a commercial lender makes and services the loan, and USDA guarantees it against loan losses of 90 percent in most cases, 100 percent in limited circumstances. USDA pays the lender a fee for providing the guarantee and primes it for the lender’s fee costs. Contact your local FSA office for a list of participating lenders.

Farm Ownership Loans
- Farm Ownership Loans may be used to purchase a family dwelling or working farm, improve improvements, build or extend farm buildings and/or improve structures, pay existing loans, and prevent soil and water erosion and pollution. The direct loan is available up to a maximum of $350,000. The maximum guaranteed loan is 75 percent of the direct loan amount, and the total cannot exceed $2,236,000. The direct loan has a maximum repayment term of 40 years.

Farm Operating Loans
- Farm Operating Loans may be used for the normal operating expenses, machinery and equipment, or on-farm buildings and/or structures. The loan may cover up to 80 percent of the project cost. The maximum loan amount is $350,000.

Sea Grant
Illinois – Indiana
Down Payment Program
assists socially disadvantaged and beginning farmers in purchasing a farm.

Youth Loans
for youth between 10-20 years old who need assistance with an educational agricultural program such as 4-H or FFA.

Emergency Loans
help cover damages/losses suffered by natural disaster

Conservation Loans
provide access to credit for farmers and ranchers who want to implement conservation measures on their land. Thereby assisting in the overall environmental sustainability of the farm.

Land Contract Guarantees
Lend an amount of $250,000

Loans for Beginning and Socially Disadvantaged Farmers

Loans for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers and Loans for Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Fact Sheet

Loans Beginning and Socially Disadvantaged Farmers
Loans for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers
Loans for Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Fact Sheet
The Farm Service Agency (FSA) developed the microloan program to better serve the unique financial operating needs of new, niche, and small to mid-sized family farm operations.

Types of Microloans
- Farm Operating Loans
- Farm Ownership Loans

Rates & Terms
- Farm operating loan: up to $50,000 (repaid within 12 months)
- Farm ownership loan: up to $50,000 (repayment will not exceed 25 years)
- Combined max: $100,000
- Interest rates (effective 3/1/2024): 4.875—5.250%

The microloan application process is simple, requiring only a few days to complete. To learn more, visit the USDA FSA website (fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/farm-loan-programs/index) for current FSA interest rates.
Additional Resources

Your Guide to FSA Farm Loan Guidebook
Links can be found on the USDA FSA’s Farm Loan Program page

USDA FSA State Office
8030 Excelsior Dr., Madison, WI 53717
888-361-2000
https://www.fsa.usda.gov/state-offices/Wisconsin/index

USDA FSA County Office
To find your local FSA office, visit farmers.gov
USDA NIFA Grants
Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Technology Transfer (STTR) Programs

offers competitive grants to qualified small businesses to support high quality research related to important scientific problems and opportunities in agriculture that could lead to significant public benefits.

SBIR/STTR Phase I
Range of awards: $125,000-$170,000
Project duration: 8 month for SBIR and 12 months for STTR

SBIR/STTR Phase II
Range of award: $600,000 - $650,000
Project duration: 24 months

For more information visit
https://www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/programs/sbir-sttr/program-information

Contact
Dr. Timothy Sullivan @ Timothey.Sullivan@usda.gov
Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education (SARE) Grants

Farmers Rancher Grant Program is a competitive grants program for farmers and ranchers who want to explore sustainable solutions to problems through on-farm research, demonstration, and education projects.

- Individual grant (up to $15,000)
- Team grants (up to $30,000)
- Projects may last up to 23 months

In 2023, NCR-SARE selected 42 out of the 140 proposal that were received.

For for information visit: northcentral.sare.org
SARE
Wisconsin State Contacts

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BIO +
To learn about more financing opportunities

Visit the Great Lakes Aquaculture Collaborative website and check out the WEBINARS & PRESENTATIONS page

Fishy Finances: Tips for Funding your Fish Farm

**Presenter:** Joan Benjamin, farmer rancher grant program coordinator and associate regional coordinator, North Central Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE).

**Date:** November 17, 2021; Steve Nehrig, Farm Credit Mid-America; Tim Sullivan, national program leader of animal production systems, USDA NIFA.
To learn about more financing opportunities or Ohio Sea Grant’s website to read

Resources for Fishy Finances: Tips to Help Fund Your Fish Farm

https://ohioseagrant.osu.edu/products/l4x9g/resources-for-fishy-finances-tips-to-help-fund-your-fish-farm
Farm Service Agency
Overview of Disaster Assistance Program Improvements (ELAP)

WI/MN - March 22, 2024
Effective with the 2021 program year, the Deputy Administrator determined to expand the coverage of losses for farm-raised fish from game and bait fish to include additional farm-raised fish for food, raised in a controlled environment as approved by FSA.

In May of 2021, FSA rolled out the policy to implement coverage of Farm Raised Fish, including Finfish and Mollusks. Reptiles are still not covered under ELAP.
FSA State Committees were tasked with finding out as much information as possible about the producers that raised farm raised fish in their states. They were obligated to determine the following information:

• Average Fair Market Values for all eligible farm raised eligible aquaculture in their state

• Establish a Normal Mortality for all eligible farm raised eligible aquaculture in their state
FSA State Committees and the National Office worked with countless Universities, Aquaculture Experts, Aquaculture and Shellfish Associations, Fish and Wildlife Service Experts, NOAA and any other experts that FSA could find, nationally and state by state.

These resources helped establish Average Fair Market Values, and helped update the NAP program pricing as well as the normal morality values that NAP uses.
At a National Level, FSA Continues to work with NAA to improve the ELAP program. Those meetings have yielded the following progress:

- A combination meeting with Catfish Farmers of America, reaching out to our FSA county offices, with training by catfish experts, and FSA to help both parties learn more about the ELAP process

- Working with NAA to produce acceptable prices for Redfish
At a National Level, FSA Continues to work with NAA to improve the ELAP program. Those meetings have yielded the following progress (Cont.):

• Working to produce a more complete marketing size list for prices for shellfish and finfish

• Helping FSA with outreach to attend events such as this.

• Introducing FSA to the different working groups of aquaculture and establishing relationships with specific species groups
At a National Level, FSA Continues to work with NAA to improve the ELAP program. Those meetings have yielded the following progress (Cont.):

• Continuing to build understanding of causes of loss to help work with Congress to updates to the ELAP program and inquiries

• Giving examples of understanding when it comes to marketing species and the life cycles to get to a marketable product

• Working with NAA to communicate the importance of supplying acceptable inventory reporting to maximize ELAP benefits
NAP and ELAP continue to work hand in hand.

• Rates for Average Fair Market Values are set using an Olympic Average, when there is enough data to sustain a 5-year period, otherwise a simple average may be used.

• Producers may earn a payment from NAP and ELAP for the same losses in the same year, as ELAP and NAP are exempt under the Multiple Benefit Exclusion at this time set under Congress.
Farm Raised Fish Payouts under ELAP since 2021:

- dollars for the 2021 Program Year - $111,221,342
- dollars for the 2022 Program Year - $67,175,605
- dollars so far, for the 2023 Program Year - $25,644,120
ELAP Farm-Raised Fish Eligibility
Eligible Losses for Aquaculture are:

- Eligible Farm Raised Fish Physical Losses
- Eligible Farm Raised Fish Feed Losses
Eligible Loss Conditions Include, but are not limited to:

- earthquakes
- excessive heat
- excessive wind
- floods
- hurricane
- tidal surge
- tornados
- volcanic eruption
- freeze
- eligible adverse weather
STC must establish normal mortality rates and average fair market values for all eligible farm-raised fish in their State:

• State Offices will establish average fair market values for the different types and sizes of eligible farm-raised fish produced in the State, with the exception of ornamental fish.

• ELAP compensates eligible farm-raised fish producers for eligible farm-raised fish death losses that occur in excess of normal mortality because of an eligible loss condition during the program year.

• If the State has established NAP mortality rates for the applicable farm-raised fish, the NAP normal mortality rate must be used for ELAP.
Payment for a specific kind/type of farm-raised fish will be based on the number or pounds or pieces, depending on the STO submission, of fish lost by subtracting the ending inventory from the beginning inventory of the specific kind/type of fish just before the loss condition, and after ensuring normal mortality has been reduced from the number or pounds of fish lost.

Normal Mortality for Farm Raised Fish is not required to be applied under ELAP, if a producer is able to provide a recent Beginning Inventory, that would be considered acceptable by the County Committee.
A producer may certify their inventory losses, if other producers in the area suffered the same losses. However, if they are unable to support that inventory with some type of acceptable documentation, then a normal mortality rate should be applied.

Producers should work with county offices to provide inventory records, and work to develop a plan for each individual producer of how/when to provide those records to the county office.
Required Documentation to be eligible for ELAP Farm Raised Fish Losses include:

- Acreage Report (surface acres of water, or if that is not available, a geo data location of the Farm Raised Fish)
- Verifiable or Reliable Documentation of Farm Raised Fish
  - Death Loss
  - Beginning Inventory, the Day Prior to the Loss
  - Ending Inventory
- Any documentation requested by the County Committee to determine if an aquaculture facility or environment is eligible.
National Payment Factors for Farm Raised Fish under ELAP are:

• 75 percent of the calculated payment, or

• 90 percent of the calculated payment, if a producer certifies to being the definition of a beginning farmer or rancher, limited resource producer, or a qualifying veteran producer.