

Water-Saving Commodities (WSC) Program



Overview

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is administering a new Water-Saving Commodities Program to support agricultural commodity production while reducing water consumption. Through the program, grants will help farmers or ranchers using irrigation practices in places that experience impacts from drought continue agricultural commodity production while simultaneously reducing water losses. Grants will support irrigation districts and producers building long term drought resilience and expanding market opportunities.

- ◆ This effort is making \$15 million available to irrigation districts and \$60 million for Tribes and Acequias.
- ◆ Grants are available to irrigation districts, or other organizations with authority to deliver water, in counties where drought and water shortages are prevalent.
- ◆ Up to \$15 million may be paid for carrying out water-saving activities over a period not-to-exceed five years. The award amount is based on a capped rate per acre-foot of water saved and will not exceed the actual cost of the water-saving activities carried out.

Water-Saving Activities

Irrigation districts will enable the production of water-saving agricultural commodities and deliver payments to producers that agree to carry out water-saving activities while maintaining production. District level activities which enable water-saving agricultural commodity production may include:

- ◆ Lining or piping water delivery canals
- ◆ Improving turnouts, headgates, pumping facilities

- ◆ Installing automation, data collection and transmittal systems
- ◆ Other innovating strategies driven by local needs

Producers may reduce water used in crop production while continuing to produce commodities by:

- ◆ Upgrading irrigation systems
- ◆ Shifting irrigation practices
- ◆ Shifting to less water-intensive crops
- ◆ Other innovative strategies driven by local needs

Expected results from these investments are conservation of up to 50,000 acre-feet in water saved across 250,000 acres of irrigated land under continued agricultural commodity production.

How does the Water-Saving Commodities Program work?

FSA will:

- ◆ process grant agreements and awards,
- ◆ review and approve the WSC Work Plan proposed by the irrigation district, and
- ◆ monitor progress in completing deliverables under each award.

Irrigation districts or other eligible organizations will:

- ◆ develop a WSC Work Plan and report to FSA on progress made in accomplishing deliverables,
- ◆ directly or through sub-agreements carry out district-level activities which reduce losses of water from storage or conveyances used to deliver water to farms or ranches,

- ◆ make direct payments to producers in a manner determined by the district for farm or ranch level activities that reduce losses of water during distribution or application on crop fields, and
- ◆ report to FSA on final successful outcomes, lessons learned, and innovations developed.

Producers will:

- ◆ carry out farm or ranch level activities approved in the WSC Work Plan, and
- ◆ optionally carry out additional activities which complement these investments and support resilience.

For More Information

For more information about the program, go to: fsa.usda.gov

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