

New USDA Grant Program – Food Safety Certification for Specialty Crops

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The Food Safety Certification for Specialty Crops (FSCSC) Program helps specialty crop operations that paid eligible on-farm food safety program expenses in 2022 and 2023. To be eligible for FSCSC applicants must meet the following:

1. Be a specialty crop operation.
2. Obtain or renew a:
 - 2022 food safety certification that was issued between June 21, 2022 and December 31, 2022; or
 - 2023 food safety certification issued during calendar year 2023; and
3. Have paid eligible expenses.
4. Meet the definition of a small business or very small business. A small business means an applicant that had an average annual monetary value of specialty crops the applicant sold during the 3-year period preceding the program year of more than \$250,000 but not more than \$500,000.

Eligible Expenses and Maximum Payment Rates

Eligible Expense	Historically Underserved Farmer or Rancher	All Other Applicants
Development of a food safety plan for first-time certification	75 percent (no maximum)	50 percent (no maximum)
Maintaining or updating a food safety plan	75 percent, up to a maximum of \$375	50 percent, up to a maximum of \$250
Food safety certification	75 percent, up to a maximum of \$2,000	50 percent, up to a maximum of \$2,000
Certification upload fees	75 percent, up to a maximum of \$375	50 percent, up to a maximum of \$250
Microbiological testing – products	75 percent, up to 5 tests	50 percent, up to 5 tests
Microbiological testing – soil amendments	75 percent, up to 5 tests	50 percent, up to 5 tests
Microbiological testing – water	75 percent, up to 5 tests	50 percent, up to 5 tests
Training	100 percent, up to a maximum of \$300	100 percent, up to a maximum of \$200

To apply: A complete application may be downloaded at farmers.gov/food-safety. The website also contains more detailed information about the program. You can also contact your local USDA FSA office. To find your local FSA office, visit farmers.gov/service-locator.