

**The North Dakota Department of Agriculture is Soliciting
National Organic Certification Cost Share Program
Request for Application Reimbursements**

**Grant Application Guidelines
Fiscal Year 2023**

Application Due Date:
October 31, 2023 at 4:00 PM CST
No late submissions accepted.



Doug Goehring, Agriculture Commissioner
North Dakota Department of Agriculture

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1) FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

a) LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The National Organic Certification Cost Share program (NOCCSP) is authorized under section 10606(d)(1) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 6523(d)), as amended by section 10004(c) of the Agriculture Act of 2014 (2014 Farm Bill; Pub. L. 113–79) and Section 10105 of the Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018 (2018 Farm Bill, Pub. L. 115-334). Under this authority, Congress authorizes USDA to provide organic certification cost share assistance to producers and handlers of agricultural products who are obtaining certification under the National Organic Program. These producers and handlers may be located within the 50 United States, the District of Columbia, and five U.S. Territories including the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the United States Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

FSA administers the Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP) using relevant sections of the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 and the Uniform Grant Guidance, 2 CFR 200. FSA awards OCCSP funds to eligible State Agencies, which operate as a pass-through system, by accepting and approving applications from producers and handlers so that State Agencies can issue reimbursements to organic operations.

b) PURPOSE

The purpose of the OCCSP is to defray the costs of receiving and maintaining organic certification under the National Organic Program.

2) AWARD INFORMATION

a) AVAILABLE FUNDING

The North Dakota Department of Agriculture (NDDA) has been allocated an estimated \$97,500.00 to reimburse FY 2023 organic operations.

b) CERTIFICATION COST REIMBURSEMENT ALLOWANCES

Reimbursement to certified organic operations are limited to 75% of the operation's total

allowable certification costs, up to a maximum of \$750 per certification scope. The scopes of organic certification include State Organic Program fees, crops, livestock, wild crops, and handler (i.e. processor).

c) PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

The period of performance is October 1, 2022 and ends September 30, 2023.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 10.171

Federal Agreement Number: USDA-FSA-SND-NOCCSP-23-NOFO0001307

3) ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

a) ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Organic operations certified to the scopes of State Organic Program fees, crops, wild crops, livestock, or handler are eligible to participate in the NOCCSP.

Operations must possess USDA organic certification at the time of application to be eligible to receive reimbursements. To be eligible:

- Between October 1, 2022 and September 30, 2023, the organic operation must have **paid** fees/expenses related to its **initial certification or renewal** and obtained certification from a USDA-accredited certifying agent.

NOTE: Operations with suspended, revoked, or withdrawn certifications are ineligible for cost share reimbursement.

b) ALLOWABLE AND UNALLOWABLE COSTS FOR CERTIFIED ORGANIC OPERATIONS

Allowable Costs	Unallowable Costs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application fees • Inspection fees, including travel costs and per diem for organic inspectors • USDA organic certification costs, including fees necessary to access international markets with which AMS has equivalency agreements or arrangements • User fees/sale assessments • Postage • State Organic Program fees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspections due to violations of USDA Organic regulations • Inspections due to violations of State Organic Program requirements • Charges related to non-USDA organic certifications • Other labeling programs • Materials, supplies, & equipment • Late fees • Membership fees • Consultant fees

4. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

a) APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Each applicant must complete the 2022 Organic Cost Share Application for North Dakota posted on the NDDA website: <https://www.nd.gov/ndda/marketing-information-division/orgamics/organic-certification-cost-share-program>.

NDDA must receive the full application, postmarked no later than October 31, 2023. A complete application must include:

1. A completed 2023 Organic Certification Cost Share Application.
2. Proof of certification within the cost share qualifying period (10/1/2022 and 9/30/2023) as issued by a USDA accredited certifying agent.
3. A copy of the itemized billing statement documenting allowable certification costs paid between 10/1/2022 and 9/30/2023.

Any applications received after the due date will not be accepted.

b) APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

NDDA will review applications to ensure the request for reimbursement meets the statutory purpose of the program, all application criteria are fulfilled, and that costs are allowable.

c) CERTIFYING AGENCIES RECEIVING APPLICATIONS

NDDA has entered into an agreement with International Certification Services (ICS) and Organic Crop Improvements Association (OCIA) Chapter 1 to collect applications on NDDA's behalf. Organic operations certified through these two agencies should contact their agency directly to apply for reimbursement.

d) ANTICIPATED AWARD ANNOUNCEMENT AND AWARD DATES

Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing as to whether or not they received a reimbursement.

5. Award Administration Information

a) POLICY REQUIREMENTS

General Compliance

All awarded applications must comply with all applicable state laws and regulations and the terms of the program as specified at <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/occp/index>.

Open Records

Applications submitted for funding shall be subject to disclosure under the North Dakota open records law.

NDDA also reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all applications received
- Waive or modify minor irregularities in proposals received after prior notification and agreement of applicant
- Clarify the scope of this program, within the RFP requirement and with appropriate notice to potential applicants, to best serve the interests of the State of North Dakota
- Amend program specifications after their release, with appropriate written notice to potential applicants
- Withhold any payments when application conditions are not met

b) PAYMENT

Once applications are reviewed by NDDA, reimbursement will be made on a first-come first-serve basis until funds are depleted.

To receive reimbursement, you are required to register with OMB Vendor Registry at <https://www.nd.gov/omb/vendor/vendor-payments>. For assistance with payment(s) call OMB Vendor Registry at 701-328-2773.

c) CONTACT

For questions or assistance, please contact:

North Dakota Department of Agriculture

Attn: Deanna Gierszewski

600 E Boulevard Ave Dept. 602

Bismarck ND 58505-0020

Phone: 701-328-2191

Fax: 701-328-1870

degierszewski@nd.gov

6. Additional Information

a) FARM SERVICE AGENCY (FSA) CONTACT

Applicants that were not able to receive funding through NDDA allocation can request assistance from FSA with the information below:

USDA-Farm Service Agency

ND State Office

Kristen Knudtson

1025 28th St. South

Fargo, ND 58103

Phone: 701-893-2216

Fax: 855-813-6644

kristen.knudtson@usda.gov

Or

Laura Heinrich

Phone: 701-893-2218

laura.heinrich@usda.gov