

United States Department of Agriculture
New Farmers Program
Customer Satisfaction Survey – Email Version

- Administrative notes in bold. Not transparent to respondent.

Email Invitation

From Address: noreply-cfigroup@qualtrics-survey.com

From Name: CFI Group on behalf of USDA

Reply-To Email: surveyhelp@cfigroup.com

Subject: USDA Customer Survey

Body:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) would like your feedback on the support you have received as a new and beginning farmer or rancher.

Please assist us in assessing our performance by completing this 15 minute survey at your earliest convenience. Your opinion is very important to us and the information you provide will help us better serve you. This survey asks about your experiences with the USDA and the support you have received as a new and beginning farmer or rancher.

This survey is being administered by CFI Group, an independent third-party research group. This brief survey asks about your satisfaction with our products and services as well as ways that we can improve our service to you. Your answers will remain anonymous and will be combined with those from other respondents for research and evaluation purposes only

Follow this link to the Survey: <Take the Survey>

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

<survey URL>

Email Reminder

Subject: Reminder: USDA Customer Survey

Body:

You recently received an invitation to provide feedback regarding the USDA and support you have received as a new and beginning farmer or rancher. Thank you if you have already responded.

If you have not, please assist us in assessing our performance by completing this 15 minute survey at your earliest convenience. Your opinion is very important to us and the information you provide will help us better serve you. This survey asks about your experiences with the USDA and the support you have received as a new and beginning farmer or rancher.

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Introduction

Thank you in advance for taking the time to provide us with your feedback!

This survey is being administered by CFI Group, an independent third-party research group. This survey asks about your satisfaction with our products and services as well as ways that we can improve our service to you. Your answers will remain anonymous and will be combined with those from other respondents for research and evaluation purposes only.

This survey is authorized by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget Control No. 1090-0007, which expires May 31, 2018.

Respondent Information

RI1. How long have you been a principal operator or senior partner of a farm operation?

Do not make managerial decisions	1	[Thank and Terminate]
Less than 1 year	2	
1 to 2 years	3	
3 to 5 years	4	
6 to 10 years	5	
11 years or longer	6	
Don't Know	7	

Thank and Terminate: Thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey. That is all the questions we have for you at this time. Have a great day!

RI2. Which of the following services, resources and assistance offered by the USDA to assist new and beginning farmers does your farm use? Select all that apply

Farm Service Agency Farm Operating Loans	1	
Farm Service Agency Farm Ownership Loans	2	
Farm Service Agency Farm Storage Facility Loans	3	
Farm Service Agency Microloans	4	
Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) Insurance	5	
Crop Insurance	6	
Training provided or funded by USDA	7	
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)	8	
Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)	9	
Farm Service Agency Transition Incentives Program (TIP)	10	

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Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA)	11	
Organic Certification Cost-Share	12	
Rural Development Value Added Producer Grant (VAPG)	13	
Rural Development - Rural Energy for America Program (REAP)	14	
Rural Cooperatives Magazine or Rural Cooperative Development Services, Research, or Statistics	15	
Other, please specify	16	
None	17	[Thank and Terminate]

RI3. How long has your farm been using these services? **[Only show selections from RI2]**

	Less than 1 year	More than 1 and less than 3 years	More than 3 and less than 5 years	More than 5 and less than 10 years	10 years or longer	Don't Know
Farm Service Agency Farm Operating Loans						
Farm Service Agency Farm Ownership Loans						
Farm Service Agency Farm Storage Facility Loans						
Farm Service Agency Microloans						
Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) Insurance						
Crop Insurance						
Training provided or funded by USDA						
Environmental Quality Incentives Program						

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(EQIP)						
Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)						
Farm Service Agency Transition Incentives Program (TIP)						
Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA)						
Organic Certification Cost-Share						
Rural Development Value Added Producer Grant (VAPG)						
Rural Development - Rural Energy for America Program (REAP)						
Rural Cooperatives Magazine or Rural Cooperative Development Services, Research, or Statistics						
Other, please specify						

RI4. [Ask only if RI2 = 7] What training sessions/programs have you participated in? Select all that apply

Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program	1	
2501 Program (Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Program)	2	
Cooperative Extension	3	
Farmers Market Promotion Program	4	
Specialty Crop Block Grant Program	5	
Risk Management Education	6	

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Rural Development Technical Training or Assistance	7	
Other, please specify	8	
Don't Know / Not Sure	9	

RI5. Does your farm have a conservation plan?

Yes	1	
No	2	[Skip to RI7]

RI6. **[Ask if RI5 = Yes]** Did you receive consultation from USDA on your conservation plan?

Yes	1	
No	2	

RI7. What are you currently farming or plan on farming in the new future? Select all that apply

Dairy	1	
Eggs	2	
Farm-raised Fish/Shellfish	3	
Poultry	4	
Cattle	5	
Hogs	6	
Goats	7	
Honey Bees	8	
Fiber	9	
Forestry	10	
Fruit and Vegetable	11	
Nursery and Flowers	12	
Row/Field Crops	13	
Other, please specify	14	

RI8. How many different crops or types of animals are currently grown/raised on your farm?

Less than 5	1	
6-10	2	
11-15	3	
16-20	4	
20 or more	5	

RI9. What is the average annual gross sales of your farming operation?

Less than \$100,000	1	
\$100,000 to \$349,999	2	
\$350,000 to \$499,999	3	
\$500,000 to \$749,999	4	
\$750,000 to \$999,999	5	

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\$1,000,000 or more	6	
Don't Know / Prefer not to answer	7	

Preparation, Training and Support from USDA Funded Projects [Ask if RI2 = 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 13, 14, or 15]

Think about all the trainings, consulting services and technical resources (cooperative extension, conservation assistance and farm business planning) provided by the USDA (or provided by others with USDA funding) that your farm has used or participated in. Using a scale from “1” to “10” where “1” means “poor” and “10” means “excellent” rate the trainings, consulting services and resources on the following. If a question is not applicable to you, please select Not Applicable / Don't Know.

		Poor 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Excellent 10	NA / Don't Know
PS_ACC	Ease of accessing trainings and/or consulting services											
PS_PREP	Degree to which the services offered properly prepare you to be successful in farming											

Loans [Ask only if RI2 = 1, 2, 3, 13, 14, or 15]

LN1. What type(s) of loans do you have with the USDA? Select all that apply.

Farm Service Agency Direct loan (USDA funded loan)	1	
Farm Service Agency Guaranteed Farm Loan (private sector loan guaranteed by USDA)	2	
Rural Energy for America Program Loan	3	
Don't Know	4	

Thinking about the Farm Loans your farm has received from the USDA, please use a scale from “1” to “10” where “1” means “poor” and “10” means “excellent” to rate the following. If a question is not applicable to you, please select Not Applicable / Don't Know.

		Poor 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Excellent 10	NA / Don't Know
LN_APPL	Ease of loan application process											
LS_AWARD	Timeliness of receiving loan notification											
LS_FUNDS	Timeliness of receiving loan funds											
LS_PAYM	Ease of making loan											

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	payments													
LS_ACCT	Ease of accessing account information													

Risk Management [Ask only if RI2 = 6]

Think about the overall experiences you've had related to crop insurance, please use a scale from "1" to "10" where "1" means "poor" and "10" means "excellent" to rate the following. If a question is not applicable to you, please select Not Applicable / Don't Know.

		Poor 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Excellent 10	NA / Don't Know
RM_BEN	Benefit of crop insurance to your farming operation											
RM_APPL	Ease of applying for crop insurance											
RM_VALUE	Value of crop insurance given the price paid											

RM_OPEN Please use the space below to provide any feedback you have regarding your experience with crop insurance or other risk management measures. (Please be as specific as possible)

RM1. Did the USDA provided incentives and/or subsidies play a role in your decision to purchase crop insurance?

Yes	1	
No	2	

Website

WEB1. How long has it been since the last time you visited the USDA New Farmers website (www.usda.gov/newfarmers)?

1 month or less	1	
2 months	2	
3 months	3	
4 months	4	
5 months	5	
6 months or longer	6	
Have never visited USDA New Farmers website	7	[Skip to next section]

Thinking about your experiences on the USDA New Farmers website, please use a scale from "1" to "10" where "1" means "poor" and "10" means "excellent" to rate the website on the following. If a question is not applicable to you, please select Not Applicable / Don't Know.

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		Poor 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Excellent 10	NA / Don't Know
WB_NAV	Ease of navigating the website											
WB_HELP	Helpfulness of information provided on the website											
WB_SEAR	Usefulness of the search function in finding what you were looking for											
WB_VIS	Visual appeal of the website											
WB_FEAT	Helpfulness of website features (e.g., Discovery Tool, Get Connected, Ask The Expert, etc.)											

Information/Communication

Think about the information and communication you've received from USDA about farming, please use a scale from "1" to "10" where "1" means "poor" and "10" means "excellent" to rate the following. If a question is not applicable to you, please select Not Applicable / Don't Know.

		Poor 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Excellent 10	NA / Don't Know
INF_ACC	Ease of accessing or requesting information											
INF_THOR	Thoroughness of information provided											
INF_TIME	Timeliness of communication received											
INF_EFF	Effectiveness of the means used for communicating with you (e.g., mail, email, etc.)											
INF_RELV	Relevance of information provide to your needs											

Customer Service

CS1. Which of the following representatives have you interacted with in the past year? Select all that apply.

Farm Service Agency Employee	1	
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National Resources Conservation Service Employee	2	
Rural Development Employee	3	
None of the above	5	[Skip to next section]

CS2. Which representative have you had the most interaction within the past 12 months? **[Only show selections from CS1]**

Farm Service Agency Employee	1	
National Resources Conservation Service Employee	2	
Rural Development Employee	3	

Think about the representatives you have had interaction with in the past 12 months. Using a scale from “1” to “10” where “1” means “poor” and “10” means “excellent,” please rate the representatives on the following. If a question is not applicable to you, please select Not Applicable / Don’t Know.

		Poor 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Excellent 10	NA / Don't Know
CS_PROF	Courtesy and professionalism of the representatives											
CS_KNOW	Knowledge of representatives											
CS_ANSW	Ability to help you find answers to your questions regarding other program areas											
CS_TIME	Timeliness in responding to your questions or requests											
CS_IMPT	Degree to which the representatives made you feel that your needs are important											

Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI Questions)

SATIS. Overall, how satisfied are you with the USDA and the support you have received as a new and beginning farmer? Please use a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is *very dissatisfied* and 10 is *very satisfied*?

	Very Dissatisfied 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Very Satisfied 10
Overall Satisfaction with the USDA and the support you have received as a new and										

USDA New Farmers Program

beginning farmer											
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EXPECT How well does the USDA meet your expectations? Please use a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means *falls short of expectations* and 10 means *exceeds expectations*.

	Falls Short Of Your Expectations 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Exceeds Your Expectations 10
How well USDA has met your expectations										

IDEAL How does the USDA compare to the ideal farming promotion and assistance program? Please use a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means *not very close to the ideal* and 10 means *very close to the ideal*.

	Not Very Close to the Ideal 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Very Close to the Ideal 10
USDA compared to ideal farming assistance program										

SAT_ OPEN [ASK IF ACS11 <= 6] You said your overall satisfaction for with the USDA is a [INSERT RESPONSE FOR SATIS] out of 10. What could the USDA improve to better serve you? (Please be as specific as possible)

Outcomes

On a scale from 1 to 10 where 1 means "Not at All Likely" and 10 means "Very Likely," please indicate how likely you are to:

		Not at All Likely 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Very Likely 10	NA / Don't Know
RECOM	Recommend USDA services to others											
CONTUS E	Continue to use USDA resources in the future											

Outreach

OR1. How did you become aware of the services the USDA offers to new and beginning farmers? Select all that apply

Friend or colleague	1	
Internet	2	
Webinar	3	
Through a community organization	4	
Public forum	5	

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State agency	6	
Other federal agency	7	
Other, please specify	8	

OR2. Prior to today, which of the following services, resources and subsidies offered by the USDA to new and beginning farmers were you aware of?

Farm Service Agency Farm Operating Loans	1	
Farm Service Agency Farm Ownership Loans	2	
Farm Storage Facility Loans	3	
Farm Service Agency Microloans	4	
Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) Insurance	5	
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Rural Cooperatives Magazine or Rural Cooperative Development Services, Research, or Statistics	15	
National Resources Conservation Service – Conservation Plan Assistance	16	

OR3. How important are be each of the following services, resources and subsidies offered by the USDA to the success of your farming operation?

	Not Applicable	Not at all important	Somewhat unimportant	Neither important nor	Somewhat important	Very important
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				unimportant		
Farm Service Agency Farm Operating Loans						
Farm Service Agency Farm Ownership Loans						
Farm Storage Facility Loans						
Farm Service Agency Microloans						
Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) Insurance						
Crop Insurance						
Training provided or funded by USDA						
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)						
Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)						
Farm Service Agency Transition Incentives Program (TIP)						
Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA)						
Organic Certification Cost-Share						
Rural Development Value Added Producer Grant (VAPG)						
Rural Development – Rural Energy for America Program (REAP)						
Rural						

USDA New Farmers Program

Cooperatives Magazine or Rural Cooperative Development Services, Research, or Statistics						
National Resources Conservation Service – Conservation Plan Assistance						

SRV_OPEN Are there any services that USDA does not currently offer that you feel would help your farm operation be successful? (Please be as specific as possible)

Demographics

DEM1. How old are you?

18 to 29 years old	1	
30 to 39 years old	2	
40 to 49 years old	3	
50 to 59 years old	4	
60 to 69 years old	5	
70 to 79 years old	6	
80 or older	7	
Prefer not to answer	8	

DEM2. Have you ever served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, military Reserves, or National Guard?

Yes, now on active duty	1	
Yes, on active duty in past, but not now	2	
No, training for Reserves or National Guard only	3	
No, never served in the military	4	

DEM3. From the dropdown, please select the state where most of your farm operation is located

Include dropdown list of all 50 US States, Puerto Rico and Other US Territories		
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DEM4. How would you classify your race/ethnicity? Select all that apply

American Indian or Alaska Native	1	
Asian	2	

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Black or African American	3	
Hispanic or Latino	4	
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	5	
White/Caucasian	6	
Other, please specify	7	
Prefer not to answer	8	

Close

CHLN What challenges do you think farmers and ranchers will face in the next three years and how can the USDA help or improve its services and programs to meet those challenges?

FINAL Please use the space below to provide any final comments you have regarding the USDA New Farmers Program. Please be as specific as possible when speaking about particular USDA programs or services.

We thank you for your time spent taking this survey. Your response has been recorded.