

**Supporting Statement**  
**Food Safety Certification for Specialty Crops Program (FSCSC)**  
**OMB control number-0560-NEW**

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) is requesting **EMERGENCY CLEARANCE** by June 22, 2022, because of the June 26, 2022, target date to begin accepting FSCSC applications as indicated in the Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA).

FSA is requesting **EMERGENCY CLEARANCE** because USDA has directed FSA to implement to implement FSCSC, which will assist specialty crop operations that incurred eligible expenses in calendar years 2022 and 2023 related to food safety certification after the date of publication of the notice of funds availability (NOFA). These operations incur significant costs to comply with regulatory requirements and market-driven food safety certification requirements each year with little opportunity to recover the increased costs.

**1. Circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.**

USDA has directed FSA to provide assistance to eligible specialty crop operations that incurred eligible expenses for 2022 and 2023 food safety certifications. Up to \$200 million in funding authorized by the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act will be used to assist these producers.

**2. How, by whom, and for what purpose is information used.**

This is a new information collection request. The information submitted by respondents will be used by FSA to determine eligibility and issue payments to eligible applicants under FSCSC.

Applicants will complete the following forms to apply for FSCSC payments:

FSA-888, Food Safety Certification for Specialty Crops Program (FSCSC)— Applicants must submit this form in order to be eligible for FSCSC payment. Applicants will use this form to provide their eligible expenses and other cost share received, and to certify that they meet the definition of a small or very small business, which is an eligibility requirement for FSCSC. Applicants will submit FSA-888 to the FSA county office employee in person or by mail, E-mail, fax, or other methods announced by FSA. The FSA county office staff will manually enter the information into an automated system.

AD-2047, Customer Data Worksheet — This form is required to collect basic customer information necessary to establish the applicant's record in FSA's Business Partner system and issue a payment. Most applicants will already have this form on file with FSA.

SF-3881, ACH Vendor/Miscellaneous Payment Enrollment Form — This form is required to obtain information necessary to issue payments by direct deposit. Most applicants will already have this form on file with FSA.

Form CCC-860, Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, Beginning and Veteran Farmer or Rancher Certification — Applicants will use this form if they are certifying that they meet the definition of a socially disadvantaged, limited resource, beginning, or veteran farmer or rancher. This form is required to determine whether the higher cost share percentages and maximum payment amounts for historically underserved producers will be used to determine an applicant's payment amount. Applicants who have previously participated in FSA programs with special provisions for historically underserved producers, such as the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program, will already have this form on file with FSA.

**3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g. permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decisions for adopting this means of collection. Also describe any consideration of information technology to reduce burden.**

The applicants will submit an FSCSC application to an FSA County Office in person or by mail, E-mail, fax, or other methods announced by FSA. Then, FSA county office staff will enter the application into an automated system.

FSCSC applicants must also submit the following forms if not already on file with FSA: AD-2047, Customer Data Worksheet, and SF-3881, ACH Vendor/Miscellaneous Payment Enrollment Form.

The electronic form versions are available in the USDA eForms website:  
<https://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eForms/welcomeAction.do?Home>.

**4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Item 2 above.**

The FSCSC application is a new information collection; therefore, no similar form exists.

**5. Methods to minimize burden on small businesses or other small entities (Item 5 of OMB Form 83-I), describe any methods to minimize burden.**

The information collected does not adversely impact small businesses or other small entities. There are approximately 22,000 small businesses or entities. This program is intended to provide assistance to small businesses; therefore, this estimate is 100 percent of the total respondents.

**6. Describe the consequences to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.**

Failure to solicit applications will result in failure to provide payments to eligible applicants.

**7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner:**

- **Requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly;**

None.

- **Requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;**

None.

- **Requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;**

None.

- **Requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years;**

None.

- **In connection with a statistical survey, that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study;**

None.

- **Requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB;**

None.

- **That includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in statute or regulation, that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge, or which unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use; or**

None.

- **Requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secret, other confidential information unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information's confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.**

None.

**8. Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the Agency to obtain their view on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and record keeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.**

This is a new information collection request. The NOFA will be published in the Federal Register and will include the 60-day comment period required by the PRA. The 3 names for consultation on FSCSC information collection request will be included in the regular submission.

**9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents.**

In order to receive an FSCSC payment, a completed application is required.

**10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to the respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or Agency policy.**

Agency policy prohibits the giving out of individual information. This information is handled according to the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC 552a, as amended) and Freedom of Information Act. The information collected on the FSCSC application form may be disclosed to other Federal, State, and Local government agencies, Tribal agencies, and nongovernmental entities that have been authorized access to the information by statute or regulation and/or as described in applicable Routine Uses identified in the System of Records Notice for USDA/FSA-2, Farm Records File (Automated).

**11. Provide additional justification for any question of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.**

No questions of a sensitive or personal nature are included in the application.

**12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information.**

USDA estimates that up to 22,000 producers may apply for FSCSC payments. This estimate was determined through consultation with the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, which provides food safety certification services and also has knowledge of the scope of private food safety certifier operations in the United States. See the Reporting and Recordkeeping Requirements spreadsheet that contains all the numbers for each form.

The annual burden for this information collection package is 25,652 hours.

CCC-888, Food Safety Certification for Specialty Crops Program (FSCSC)— Applicants are required to submit this form to be eligible for FSCSC payment. The estimated burden hours for the application is 22,000 (22,000 x 1 hour).

AD-2047, Customer Data Worksheet—This form is required to collect basic customer information necessary to establish the applicant's record in FSA's Business Partner system and issue a payment. The estimated burden hours for the application is 2,200 (2,200 x 1 hour).

SF-3881, ACH Vendor/Miscellaneous Payment Enrollment Form—This form is required to obtain information necessary to issue payments by direct deposit. The estimated burden hours for the application is 352 (2,200 x 0.16 hour).

Form CCC-860, Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, Beginning and Veteran Farmer or Rancher Certification — This form is required for an applicant to be eligible for a higher cost share percentage and maximum payment amount if they qualify as a historically underserved producer. The estimated burden hours for the application is 1,100 (11,000 x 0.10 hour).

Respondent cost per hour was derived by using U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment and Wages, May 2021, 11-9013 Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers. The average hourly rate (using 75% median) for farmers, ranchers and managers is \$46.40. Fringe benefits for all private industry workers are an additional 29.9 percent, or \$11.22, resulting in a total of \$57.52 per hour. The estimated cost is \$1,472,460 (\$57.52 x 25,652 hours).

**13. Provide an estimated of the total annual cost burden to the respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information.**

There are no capital, startup, or ongoing operation/maintenance costs associated with this information collection to respondents or record-keepers.

**14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal Government.**

The cost of form development, printing and distribution is minimal because the forms are computer generated. FSCSC application information will be entered in an automated system manually by the county office employees. County employee cost per response is equal to 0.5 hours for completion of the application form multiplied by \$27.57 (estimated county employee average hourly wage; based 2022 General Schedule, Grade 7, Step 6 (using mid-west average hourly rate). Fringe benefits for all government workers are an additional 31 percent, or \$12.52, resulting in a total of \$40.09 per hour. The total annualized cost to the Federal Government is \$440,997 (0.5 hours x \$40.09 x 22,000 respondents).

**15. Explain the reason for any program changes or adjustments reported in Items 13 or 14 of the OMB Form 83-I.**

This is a new information request.

**16. For collection of information whose results will be published, outline plans for the tabulation and publication.**

FSA may announce the total number of FSCSC applicants and payments issued by press release or other means.

**17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for the OMB approval of information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.**

FSA is requesting to display the OMB expiration date.

**18. Explain each exception statement to the certification statement identified.**

FSA is able to certify compliance with all provisions.