

**United States Department of Agriculture
Farm Service Agency (FSA)
Supporting Statement
Increasing Land, Capital, and Market Access Grant Program
OMB Control Number: 0560-NEW**

Farm Service Agency (FSA) is requesting for OMB approval on the new collection request associated with the Increasing Land, Capital, and Market Access Grant Program.

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

USDA has directed the Farm Production and Conservation (FPAC) mission area and FSA to implement the Increasing Land Capital, and Market Access Grant Program to fund projects that support a diverse set of farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners (producers) on the edge financially; moving them from surviving to thriving as they address core barriers to attain land, capital, and market access.

2. Indicate how, by whom and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for new collections, indicate the actual use the Agency has made of the information received from the current collection.

FSA uses the information to determine whether recipients meet the eligibility requirements to be a recipient of grant funds and to report on the progress related to the funding opportunity requirements. Lack of adequate information to make the determination could result in the improper administration and appropriation of Federal grant funds.

The information collection requirements are described below and on the attached Reporting and Recordkeeping Requirements.

Initial Reports

An initial report will be completed to facilitate future reporting. The initial report will include:

- Awardee contact information.
- Project Title.
- Period of Performance.
- Award Amount.
- If the agreement contains subawards.
- Project Summary.
- Project Objective and targeted number of producers who will be served.
- Awardee developed outcomes and measurable metrics.
- Project beneficiaries.
- Budget.

Progress Reports

Progress reports will be required after the first quarter and at least quarterly thereafter on the project, including the following components:

- Targeted audience(s) including demographic, geographic, and economic status.
- Conducted outreach including number and type of events, dates, locations, activities, and producers anticipated and impacted.
- Budget information including requested fund amounts, allocation of requested funds, amount of funds provided for assistance directly benefitting underserved producers, and number of producers benefitted by use of funds.
- Data identifying outcomes, improvements, and impact on underserved producers' business and financial conditions.
- Anticipated outcomes including the estimated number of underserved producers who will have increased access to land, capital, and markets (including new markets).
- How many underserved producers will be able to retain land or acquire new land; and
- How many underserved producers are seeking and participating in USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service programs, Farm Service Agency farm loan programs, Rural Development loan, Risk Management Agency or grant programs or any other programs and services administered by USDA.
- Recommendations and barrier identification for USDA to improve access to programs and services.
- Sharing of success stories.

These progress reports and associated Partner meetings may also include collection of the following information:

- Lessons-learned as projects are implemented.
- Options and approaches for providing technical assistance to participating farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners.
- Mechanisms for reducing costs of implementation.
- Synthesis of outcomes and successes.
- Opportunities for USDA and others to inform future approaches to increasing a diverse set of farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners access to land, capital, and markets.

Collections Approved under Other OMB Control Numbers: The following table summarizes the information collection in the Grants.gov for which approval has been obtained under the OMB Control Number.

Description	Approved Under
SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance	4040-0004
SF-424A, Budget Information Non-Construction	4040-0006
SF-424B, Assurances Non-Construction	4040-0007
SF-425, Financial Status Report	4040-0014
SF-270, Request for Advance and Reimbursement	4040-0012

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, for example, permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis of the decisions for adopting this means of collection. Also describe any consideration of information technology to reduce burden.

Data will be collected through the Results Verification System (RVS), administered through the University of Minnesota. This secure web system was designed to reduce grantee reporting burden by utilizing autofill and drop-down menus to the maximum extent possible.

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

There is no duplication of information involved with processing of grant request, the monitoring of the Increasing Land, Capital, and Market Access Grant Program's grant request, or the monitoring of the Increasing Land, Capital, and Market Access Grant Program grant itself. Increasing Land, Capital, and Market Access Grant Program provides information on a regular basis to the agency to ensure that the program is still eligible to receive federal funds.

5. Methods to minimize burden on small businesses or other small entities (Item 5 of the Reporting and Recordkeeping Requirements), describe any methods to minimize the burden.

There is no significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities since it contains normal business recordkeeping requirements and minimal essential reporting requirements. FSA estimates at least 45 small entities.

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.

The activity requires the minimum information needed to determine whether Increasing Land, Capital, and Market Access Grant Program is eligible for application for Federal Assistance and reporting. This minimum reporting of information is necessary for FSA to administer the Increasing Land, Capital, and Market Access Grant Program in an equitable and cost-effective manner.

If the information is not collected, FSA will not be able to effectively manage the grant awards.

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

- a) Requiring respondents to report information more frequently than quarterly. There are no information collection requirements that require information more frequently than quarterly.
- b) Requiring written responses in less than 30 days. There are no information collection requirements that require written responses in less than 30 days.

- c) Requiring more than an original and two copies. There are no information collection requirements that require more than an original or single copy of a document.
- d) Requiring respondents to retain records for more than 3 years. There are no such requirements.
- e) No utilizing statistical sampling. There are no such requirements.
- f) Requiring the use of statistical sampling which has not been reviewed and approved by OMB. There are no such requirements.
- g) Requiring the pledge of confidentiality. There are no such requirements.
- h) Requiring submission of proprietary trade secrets. There are no such requirements.

8. Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the Agency to obtain their view on 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.

The 60-day notice requesting public comment was published on January 30, 2023 (88 FR 5851-5852). We received 4 comments via Regulations.gov.

- Two comments were in general support of the program.
- One comment expressed support for protecting public land as wilderness. The Increasing Land, Capital, and Market Access Program does not propose converting public wilderness land to other land uses. All funded activities will undergo an environmental assessment prior to implementation.
- One comment expressed concern that:
 1. Grantees may shift the reporting burden to the underserved farmers/producers that their funded project is intended to assist.
 2. Underserved farmers/producers may choose not to participate because of concerns about their data being shared.

FSA intends to address these concerns by only collecting an aggregation of producer data and by minimizing the amount of data collected.

FSA is conducting the Increasing Land, Capital, and Market Access Grant Program grant activity that involves gathering information from grantees to apply for and report on the award(s). We have consulted with three stakeholders-The University of Minnesota, Virginia Tech, and National Young Farmers Coalition and incorporated many of their suggestions into the reports to minimize the burden on the recipients.

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

There is no payment or gift given to respondents.

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

There is no assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents for the information required in this collection. The information collected pertains mostly to administering federal grants according to rules and regulations for the general administration of federal grants.

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.

The information collected under this docket is financial in nature as a condition for the receipt of federal grant funds. Participants disclose financial information as well as information of their business operations. The information is required to properly administer federal funds.

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

The estimate of hour burden of the information collection as provided in the Reporting and Recordkeeping Requirements spreadsheet, is as follows:

Total number of Unduplicated Respondents	50.
Reports Filed Per Respondent	5.
Total Annual Responses	250.
Total Annual Burden Hours	3,650.

Respondent cost per hour was derived by using U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment and Wages, May 2022, 11-9013 Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers. The hourly wage rate, as measured by the Bureau of Labor, is \$49.58. Fringe benefits for all private industry workers are an additional \$12.97 which resulted in a total of \$62.55 per hour. The estimated respondent cost is \$228,308 (3,650 x \$62.55).

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information.

The information collection places no burden costs on respondents for capital, start-up, operation, maintenance, or the purchase of services.

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

FSA employees provide guidance and assistance to Increasing Land, Capital, and Market Access Grant Program awardees in obtaining and reporting the information needed. In addition, they provide templates for completion to ensure information provided is complete and accurate, and to reduce the time it takes Increasing Land, Capital, and Market Access Grant Program awardees to gather and submit the requested information. Also, employees review the information provided to effectively administer federal grant funds according to applicable rates and regulations for the general administration of federal grants. It is an estimate that employees

spend 54 hours on information submitted from each Increasing Land, Capital, and Market Access Grant Program awardee.

FSA employee cost per response is equal 54 hours multiplied by \$62.34 (estimated National employee average hourly wage; based 2023 General Schedule, Grade 14, Step 6). Fringe benefits for all government workers are an additional 31 percent, or \$19.87 resulting in a total of \$81.21 per hour. The total annualized cost to the Federal Government is \$296,417.

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 collection request.

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

The information collections under this OMB control number may be tabulated or published as part of the collaborating network established under the grant opportunity.

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 will display the OMB expiration date for the format.

18. Explain each exception statement to the certification statement.

There are no exceptions requested.