

**National Organic Program (NOP)**  
**Organic Certification Cost-Share Programs (OCCSP)**

**Type:** Grant, non-competitive

**Maximum Award:** Program participants may be reimbursed for up to 75 percent of their organic certification costs, not to exceed \$750 per category of certification per year.

**The Cost-Share Programs:** The National (NOCCSP) Organic Certification Cost-Share Program and the Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) Organic Certification Cost-Share Program provide reimbursements to eligible organic crop and livestock producers and handlers for a portion of their organic certification costs. State agencies (typically Departments of Agriculture) enter into a grant agreement with the USDA to administer the programs. State agencies process applications for cost share funds and the USDA reimburses them. Applicants typically submit a one-page application form, a W-9 form, proof of certification, and an itemized invoice of certification expenses to their State's department of agriculture. The State agency reviews the application and then may reimburse the applicant for up to the maximum award.

**Who Can Apply:** All organic operations are eligible to apply to the NOCCSP and crop and livestock producers who have received organic certification or a renewal of certification from an accredited certifying agent are eligible to participate in the AMA. The program funds are administered on a first-come, first-served basis until funds are exhausted. Transitioning farms which have not yet received certification are ineligible.

**Allowable Certification Costs:** Most certification-related costs are eligible. Eligible and ineligible costs include:

- Eligible costs: Application fees, Inspection costs, travel /per diem for inspectors, user fees, sales assessments, and postage.
- Ineligible costs: Equipment, materials, supplies, late fees, and inspections for transitional certifications or due to violations of NOP regulations.

**More Information:** The Federal Crop Insurance Act of 2001 authorized the USDA to provide organic certification cost share assistance through the AMA to eligible organic crop and livestock producers in Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 authorized the USDA to provide cost share assistance through the NOCCSP to eligible organic producers and handlers in the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

In FY 14 (October 1, 2013 through September 30, 2014), \$1.5 million is available through the AMA and \$11.5 million is available through the NOCCSP. Each participating State is allocated funds based on the number of certified operations and past fund usage.

**Points of Contact:**

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