



U.S. Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Marketing Service
National Organic Program

Organic Certification Cost Share Programs

CFDA Number: 10.171

NOP 6000: FY 2014 Policies and Procedures

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/NOPCostSharing>

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Changes from the Previous Version of the Eligibility, Application Requirements, and Grant Management Procedures

The following changes apply to the fiscal year 2014 program and are incorporated throughout the document.

- This document is intended to be used as the Request for Applications.
- Reformatted and consolidated program requirements and information, where possible.
- Additional examples of reimbursement allowances are provided in this document.

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1.0 PROGRAM OVERVIEW AND AUTHORITIES

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The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP) consists of the National Organic Certification Cost Share Program (NOCCSP) and the Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) Organic Certification Cost Share Program. The OCCSP defrays the cost of organic certification by authorizing USDA to allocate funds from the NOCCSP and AMA to eligible State Agencies. The State Agencies then reimburse certified organic operators for a portion of their costs incurred to obtain or maintain certification to the National Organic Regulations.

For fiscal year 2014, individual organic operators are eligible for reimbursement of 75 percent of their 2014 (October 1, 2013 through September 30, 2014) certification costs up to a maximum of \$750 per category of certification.

The USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), National Organic Program (NOP) administers the NOCCSP and AMA.

1.1 NATIONAL ORGANIC CERTIFICATION COST SHARE PROGRAM (NOCCSP)

The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (2002 Farm Bill)(7 U.S.C. 7901 note) authorized the Department of Agriculture (USDA) to provide grants to 50 States, the District of Columbia, and 5 territories who will provide cost share assistance to organic producers and handlers who participate in the National Organic Certification Cost Share Program (NOCCSP).

Section 10301 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill)(7 U.S.C. 8701 note) amended the 2002 Farm Bill and authorized USDA to provide grants to States from 2008 through 2012 to encourage participation in organic food production. The American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (26 U.S.C. 1 note) extended the 2008 Farm Bill for one year until September 30, 2013, but did not provide funding for the NOCCSP. Section 10004(c) of the Agriculture Act of 2014 (2014 Farm Bill) (Pub. L. 113-79) amended the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 and authorized the USDA to provide 11.5M to assist producers and handlers of agricultural products in obtaining certification under the National Organic Program.

1.2 AGRICULTURAL MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE (AMA) ORGANIC CERTIFICATION COST SHARE PROGRAM

The Federal Crop Insurance Act (FCIA) of 2001, as amended (7 U.S.C. 1524) authorized the USDA to provide organic certification cost share assistance through the Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) Organic Certification Cost Share Program to producers in 16 states; Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

2.0 REGULATORY, ADMINISTRATIVE, AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS

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The NOP applies the following Federal grant uniform administrative requirements, Federal cost principles, assurances and certifications to the management of each grant award. You, as the recipient, agree to the terms and conditions outlined in this document when signing the AMS-33, Agreement Face Page (AMS-33). You are accountable for the performance of the project, program, or activity; the appropriate expenditure of funds under the award by all parties; and all other obligations, as cited in the AMS-33. In general, the requirements that apply to you as the recipient also apply to your subrecipients and contractors under grants, unless the terms and conditions specify an exception.

2.1. UNIFORM ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

- [7 CFR Part 3015](#), “Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations”
- [7 CFR Part 3016](#), “Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments”
- [7 CFR Part 3019](#), “Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Other Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Nonprofit Organizations”

2.2. FEDERAL COST PRINCIPLES

- [2 CFR Part 225 \(OMB Circular No. A-87\)](#), “Cost Principles for State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments”
- [2 CFR Part 220 \(OMB Circular No. A-21\)](#), “Cost Principles for Educational Institutions”
- [2 CFR Part 230 \(OMB Circular No. A-122\)](#), “Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations”

2.3. ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATIONS

- Assurances – Non-Construction Programs, as listed on [Standard Form 424B](#).
- [41 U.S.C. 22](#), No member of Congress must be admitted to any share or part of this agreement, or to any benefit arising from it.
- Report Subaward and Executive Compensation Information in accordance with [2 CFR part 170, Appendix A to part 170 – Award Term](#).
- [Form AD-1047](#), “Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters - Primary Covered Transactions.”
- [Form AD-1048](#), “Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion – Lower Tier Covered Transactions.” Note: The recipient is responsible for obtaining the signatures and retaining the certificates, if warranted, from lower tier recipients or contractors as defined in [2 CFR part 417](#). (2 CFR part 417 replaced 7 CFR part 3017)
- [Form AD-1049](#), “Certification Regarding Drug-Free Workplace Requirements (Grants) Alternative I – For Grantees Other Than Individuals.”
- Certification Regarding Lobbying in accordance to [Appendix A of 7 CFR 3018](#). Note: The appropriate lobbying disclosure report form, [Standard Form LLL](#), is available from the Federal Agency, if applicable. *Exception: Certification Regarding Lobbying is not required from recipients of a Federal contract, grant, or cooperative agreement of \$100,000 or less.*

3.0 DEFINITIONS

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Federal Agency. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), National Organic Program (NOP).

Grant. An award of financial assistance, including cooperative agreements, in the form of money, or property in lieu of money, by the Federal Government to an eligible entity.

Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number. The nine-digit number established and assigned by Dun and Bradstreet, Inc. (D&B) to uniquely identify business entities. A DUNS number may be obtained from D&B by telephone (currently 866-705-5711) or the Internet (currently at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>).

Entity. All of the following, as defined at 2 CFR part 25, subpart C:

1. A Governmental organization, which is a State, local government, or Indian tribe;
2. A foreign public entity;
3. A domestic or foreign nonprofit organization;
4. A domestic or foreign for-profit organization; and
5. A Federal agency, but only as a subrecipient under an award or subaward to a non-Federal entity.

Grantee/State Agency. The government agency to which a grant is awarded and which is accountable for the use of the funds provided. The grantee is the entire legal entity even if only a particular component of the entity is designated in the grant award document.

Pass-through entity. Means a non-Federal entity that provides a Federal award to a subrecipient to carry out a Federal program. Reference [Circular No. A-133: Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations](#).

Recipient. The recipient is the entire legal entity even if the Grant Agreement (AMS-33) designates only a particular component of the entity.

State. Any of the fifty States of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, U.S. Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa.

State Department of Agriculture. The agency, commission, or department of a State government responsible for agriculture within the State.

Subaward. An award of financial assistance in the form of money, or property in lieu of money, made under an award by a grantee to an eligible subrecipient. The term includes financial assistance when provided by contractual legal agreement, but does not include procurement purchases or any form of assistance, which is excluded from the definition of grant in this part.

Subrecipient. The government or other legal entity to which a subgrant is awarded and is accountable to the grantee for the use of the funds provided. A subrecipient receives a subaward from the State under this award and is accountable to the State for the use of the Federal funds provided by the subaward.

System for Award Management (SAM). The Federal repository into which an entity must provide information required for the conduct of business as a recipient. Additional information about registration procedures may be found at the SAM Internet site (currently at <https://www.sam.gov/>).

4.0 ELIGIBLE ENTITIES

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4.1 STATE AGENCIES

4.1.1 NATIONAL ORGANIC CERTIFICATION COST SHARE PROGRAM (NOCCSP)

The [State Departments of Agriculture](#) 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 are eligible to participate in the NOCCSP.

4.1.2 AGRICULTURAL MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE (AMA) ORGANIC CERTIFICATION COST SHARE PROGRAM

Sixteen (16) states are eligible to participate in the AMA; these include Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

4.2 ORGANIC OPERATIONS

Operations must possess current USDA organic certification to be eligible to receive reimbursements. This means operations either must have successfully received their initial USDA organic certification from a USDA-accredited certifying agent, or must have incurred expenses related to the renewal of their USDA organic certification from a USDA-accredited certifying agent between October 1, 2013 and September 30, 2014. Operations with suspended or revoked certifications are ineligible for reimbursement. The applicable NOP regulations and resources for certification are available on the NOP website at www.ams.usda.gov/nop.

4.2.1 NATIONAL ORGANIC CERTIFICATION COST SHARE PROGRAM (NOCCSP)

Organic producers (crops, wild crops, and/or livestock) and/or handlers are eligible to participate in the NOCCSP.

4.2.2 AGRICULTURAL MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE (AMA) ORGANIC CERTIFICATION COST SHARE PROGRAM

Organic producers (crops, wild crops, and/or livestock) are eligible to participate in the AMA. Handlers are not eligible to participate in the AMA.

5.0 ALLOWABLE COSTS

5.1 STATE AGENCY ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

State agencies may assess up to 10% in indirect costs and overhead costs associated with administration and outreach activities that support organic agriculture conducted through this agreement. No other indirect costs are chargeable to this award. Please see [2 CFR Part 225](#) for further guidance on cost principles for State governments.

5.2 ORGANIC OPERATION CERTIFICATION COSTS

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Exhibit 1 – Allowable and Unallowable Certification Costs

Allowable Costs	Unallowable Costs
• Application fees • Inspection costs • First-time USDA NOP certification fees • Travel costs/per diem for organic inspectors • User fees/ sales assessments • Postage	• Late fees • Inspections due to violations of NOP regulations • Any charges related to certifications other than USDA organic • Transitional certifications • Materials and supplies • Equipment

5.3 CERTIFICATION COST REIMBURSEMENTS

Payments are limited to 75% (seventy-five percent) of an individual producer's certification costs, up to a maximum of \$750 (seven hundred and fifty dollars) per certificate or category of certification, per year.

Eligible operations may receive one reimbursement per year per certificate or category of certification (if one certificate includes multiple categories). Each certificate may be reimbursed separately. Likewise, each category of certification may be reimbursed separately.

5.3.1 AGRICULTURAL MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE (AMA) ORGANIC CERTIFICATION COST SHARE PROGRAM

Three categories of certification are eligible for reimbursement under the AMA cost share program: crops, wild crops, and livestock.

Example 1 – One Category

An operation certified for the category of crops is only eligible for up to 75% of certification costs up to a maximum of \$750.

Example 2 – Two Categories

An operation certified for the categories of crops and livestock is eligible for up to 75% of the certification costs for both categories combined up to a maximum of \$1,500, even if a single certificate lists all of the categories.

Example 3 – Three Categories

An operation certified for the categories of crops, wild crops, and livestock is eligible for up to 75% of the certification costs for these categories combined up to a maximum of \$2,250, even if a single certificate lists all of the categories.

5.3.2 NATIONAL ORGANIC CERTIFICATION COST SHARE PROGRAM (NOCCSP)

Four categories of certification are eligible for reimbursement under the NOCCSP: crops, wild crops, livestock, and handler.

Examples 1, 2, and 3 provided in the AMA (above) also apply to the NOCCSP.

Example 4 – All 4 Categories

An operation certified for the categories of crops, wild crops, livestock, and handler is eligible for up to 75% of the certification costs for these categories combined up to a maximum of \$3,000, even if a single certificate lists all of the categories.

5.3.3 LIMITATIONS

To prevent duplicative applications, handlers doing business in states participating in the AMA may apply for reimbursement under the NOCCSP. Producers may apply for reimbursement under both the NOCCSP and the AMA; however, the cumulative reimbursement amount cannot exceed the 75 percent or a maximum of \$750 per category of certification per year.

6.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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6.1 FEDERAL AGENCY

6.1.1 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Federal Agency will:

1. Exclusively manage Federal employees of the Federal Agency.
2. Provide to the State Agency, funds for providing cost-share assistance to organic handlers. The State Agency may assess, against processed disbursements, an amount not to exceed 10 percent for indirect or overhead costs associated with conducting the agreement.
3. Provide guidance, technical assistance and appropriate instruction to the State Agency during implementation of the agreement.
4. Monitor the performance of the State Agency in implementing this agreement and, when needed, recommend ways to improve the State Agency's performance.
5. Provide a minimum of 45 days' notice to the State Agency for any change(s), which affects the performance of the State Agency under this agreement. Changes may be made at any time upon mutual consent of all parties to the agreement. All changes to the agreement will be in writing.

Authorized Federal Agency Representative. The authorized Federal Agency Representative is the designated representative of the AMS NOP with authority to act on the organization's behalf in matters related to the award of grants. In signing the AMS-33, this individual agrees that the organization will obligate the funds for approved projects, programs, and activities in accordance with applicable Federal statutes and regulations and other terms and conditions of the award.

Federal Agency Project Manager. The Federal Agency Project Manager is the official whose name appears on the AMS-33 and is responsible for the business management and programmatic aspects of the AMS OCCSP award. These activities include, but are not limited to, preparation of funding opportunity announcements, evaluating grant applications for administrative content and compliance with statutes, regulations, and

guidelines, and providing consultation and technical assistance to applicants and recipients, including interpretation of grants administration policies and provisions. Other activities include post-award monitoring of project/program performance, including the review of performance reports and closing out grants. The Federal Agency Project Manager approves requests for prior approval and is responsible for setting policy.

Grants Management Specialist. The Grants Management Specialist oversees the day-to-day management of a portfolio of OCCSP grants. The Grants Management Specialist performs many of the activities described above on behalf of the Federal Agency Project Manager and usually is the primary point of contact for the recipient when dealing with grant-related issues.

6.2 STATE AGENCY

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6.2.1 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The NOP awards grants to State Agencies, which are legally accountable for the performance of the award and the expenditure of funds. As a pass-through entity, the State Agencies must:

1. Exclusively manage State Agency employees and/or designees;
2. Comply with and require subrecipients to comply with the applicable regulatory, administrative, and national policy requirements outlined in [Section 2](#). Enter into a formal written agreement with each subgrantee that addresses the arrangements for meeting the programmatic, administrative, financial, and reporting requirements of the grant, including those necessary to ensure compliance with all applicable Federal regulations and policies;
3. Assign qualified personnel, and provide office space, including utilities, office equipment and supplies, administrative support, and other items necessary to carry out the intent of this agreement;
4. Establish policies and procedures sufficient to make cost-share funds available to eligible applicants, evaluate requests for cost-share funds, grant approval or denial of requested funds, justify denial of a request, and distribute funds to eligible producers and handlers seeking cost share assistance; and *NOTE: States participating in the AMA program may not reimburse handlers using AMA funds. States participating in the AMA program may use NOCCSP funds to reimburse handlers.*
5. Conduct public outreach necessary to ensure a general understanding and knowledge of the cost-share program among organic producers and handlers operating within the State.

The roles and responsibilities of designated individuals at the State Departments of Agriculture who serve as agents of the recipient are as follows:

Authorized Representative. The Authorized Representative is the designated representative of the State Departments of Agriculture with authority to act on the organization's behalf in matters related to the award and administration of grants. In signing a grant application, this individual agrees that the organization will assume the obligations imposed by applicable Federal statutes and regulations and other terms and conditions of the award, including any assurances. These responsibilities include accountability for both the appropriate use of awarded funds and the performance of the grant-supported activities. Although AMS requires you to designate such an individual, AMS does not specify the organizational location or full set of responsibilities for this individual.

6.3 ALL RECIPIENTS

Non-Federal entities meaning a state, local government, Indian tribal government, or nonprofit organization, including an institution of higher education that carries out a Federal award as a recipient or subrecipient, must adhere to all applicable Federal statutes, regulations, and policies, including income tax regulations. Recipients should direct questions concerning the applicability of income tax regulations to grant funds to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Recipients also must comply with applicable State and local laws and ordinances.

1. All subsequent secondary agreements made by the State Agency with third parties for completion of any of the project requirements and responsibilities outlined herein shall be reviewed with the Federal Agency prior to their initiation and acceptance, for general consensual agreement of the scope of work.
2. Each party to this agreement shall be responsible for, and assumes liability for, any decisions made by such party pursuant to this agreement and any actions taken pursuant to such decisions. Furthermore, neither party shall be responsible for, and assumes no liability for, decisions made by the other party under the terms of this agreement.

7.0 STATE AGENCY APPLICATION SUBMISSION AND RECEIPT PROCEDURES

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This section provides instructions for the submission and receipt of State Agency applications. Please read the following instructions carefully and completely. NOP will invite each State Agency to participate in the cost share programs, identify application deadlines, and process application packages for each State Agency through Grants.gov.

7.1 AMS-33 AGREEMENT

The NOP will send the State Agency two (2) original signed AMS-33. The State Agency then signs both forms; returns one to the NOP and retains one for their records. See [Section 2](#) for specific details.

Due to security procedures at USDA headquarters, packages may be damaged or delayed when sent through the United States Postal Service; NOP recommends using express mail or courier service to mail the AMS-33.

7.2 GRANTS.GOV

NOP is participating in the Grants.gov Initiative that provides the Grant Community a single site to find and apply for grant funding opportunities. NOP encourages applicants to submit their applications electronically through <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>.

7.2.1 THE FOLLOWING DESCRIBES WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN APPLYING ONLINE USING GRANTS.GOV/APPLY:

a. Instructions. On the site, you will find step-by-step instructions, which enable you to apply for NOP funds. The Grants.gov/Apply feature includes a simple, unified application process that makes it possible for applicants to apply for grants online. There are five "Get Registered" steps for an Organization to complete at Grants.gov. The information applicants need to understand and execute the steps can be found at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>.

Applicants should read the registration process carefully. The site also contains registration checklists to help you walk through the process. NOP recommends that you download the checklists and prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process. Reviewing and assembling required

information before beginning the registration process will alleviate last minute searches for required information and save time.

b. DUNS Requirement. All applicants applying for funding, including renewal funding, must have a Dun and Bradstreet Universal Data Numbering System (DUNS) number. The DUNS number must be included in the data entry field labeled "Organizational DUNS" on the SF-424 form. Instructions for obtaining a DUNS number can be found at the following website: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-1-obtain-duns-number.html>.

c. System for Award Management. In addition to having a DUNS number, applicants applying electronically through Grants.gov must register with the federal System for Award Management (SAM). Step-by-step instructions for registering with SAM can be found here: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-2-register-with-sam.html>. All applicants must register with SAM in order to apply online. Failure to register with the SAM will result in your application being rejected by Grants.gov during the submissions process.

d. Username and Password. The next step in the registration process is creating a username and password with Grants.gov to become an Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR). AORs will need to know the DUNS number of the organization for which they will be submitting applications to complete this process. To read more detailed instructions for creating a profile on Grants.gov visit: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-3-username-password.html>.

e. AOR Authorization. After creating a profile on Grants.gov, the E-Biz Point of Contact (E-Biz POC) a representative from your organization who is the contact listed for SAM will receive an email to grant the AOR permission to submit applications on behalf of their organization. The E-Biz POC will then log in to Grants.gov and approves an applicant as the AOR, thereby giving him or her permission to submit applications. To learn more about AOR Authorization visit: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-4-aor-authorization.html>. To track an AOR status visit: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-5-track-aor-status.html>.

Applicants are encouraged to register early. The registration process can take up to four weeks to be completed. Therefore, registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact your ability to meet required submission deadlines. You will be able to submit your application online anytime after you have been approved as an AOR.

f. Electronic Signature. Applications submitted through Grants.gov constitute a submission as electronically signed applications. The registration and account creation with Grants.gov with E-Biz POC approval, establishes an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR). When you submit the application through Grants.gov, the name of your AOR on file will be inserted into the signature line of the application. Applicants must register the individual who is able to make legally binding commitments for the applicant organization as the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR); this step is often missed and it is crucial for valid submissions.

7.2.2 INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO SUBMIT AN ELECTRONIC APPLICATION TO NOP VIA GRANTS.GOV/APPLY:

Grants.gov has a full set of instructions on how to apply for opportunities on its website at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/grant-application-process.html>. The following provides simple guidance on what you will find on the Grants.gov/Apply site. Applicants are encouraged to read the page entitled, "Complete Application Package" before getting started.

Grants.gov allows applicants to download the application package, instructions and forms that are incorporated in the instructions, and work offline. In addition to forms that are part of the application instructions, there will be a series of electronic forms that are provided utilizing Adobe Reader.

a. Adobe Reader. Adobe Reader is available free to download from on the Download Software page: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support/technical-support/recommended-software.html>. Adobe Reader allows applicants to read the electronic files in a form format so that they will look like any other Standard or NOP form. The Adobe Reader forms have content sensitive help. This engages the content sensitive help for each field you will need to complete on the form. The Adobe Reader forms can be downloaded and saved on your hard drive, network drive(s), or CDs.

NOTE: for the Adobe Reader, Grants.gov is compatible with versions 8.1.1 and later versions. Always refer to the Download Software page for compatible versions. Please do not use lower versions of the Adobe Reader.

b. Mandatory Fields in Adobe Forms. In the Adobe Reader forms, you will note fields that will appear with a background color on the data fields to be completed. These fields are mandatory fields and they must be completed to successfully submit your application.

c. Completion of SF-424 Fields First. The Adobe Reader forms are designed to fill in common required fields such as the applicant name and address, DUNS number, etc., on all Adobe Reader forms. To trigger this feature, an applicant must complete the SF-424 information first. Once it is completed, the information will transfer to the other forms.

d. Customer Support. The Grants.gov website provides customer support via toll-free 1-(800)-518-GRANTS or through email at support@grants.gov. For grant opportunity related questions, contact the number listed in the application package of the grant you are applying for. If you are experiencing difficulties with your submission, it is best to call the Contact Center and get a case number. The case number will assist the NOP with tracking your issue and provide background information on the issue.

7.2.3 TIMELY RECEIPT REQUIREMENTS AND PROOF OF TIMELY SUBMISSION.

a. Electronic Submission. All applications must be received by 11:59 PM Eastern time on the **June 20, 2014** established for each program. Proof of timely submission is automatically recorded by Grants.gov. An electronic time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by Grants.gov. The applicant will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number from Grants.gov with the successful transmission of their application. Applicants should print this receipt and save it, along with facsimile receipts for information provided by facsimile, as proof of timely submission. When NOP successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov, Grants.gov will provide an electronic acknowledgment of receipt to the email address of the AOR. Proof of timely submission shall be the date and time that Grants.gov receives your application. Applications received by Grants.gov after the established due date for the program will be considered late and will not be considered for funding by NOP.

Applicants using dial-up connections should be aware that transmission should take some time before Grants.gov receives it. Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received transmission message. The Grants.gov Contact Center reports that some applicants abort the transmission because they think that nothing is occurring during the transmission process. Please be patient and give the system time to process the application. Uploading and transmitting many files, particularly electronic forms with associated XML schemas, will take some time to be processed.

8.0 POST AWARD MANAGEMENT

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8.1 DETERMINE APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

State Agencies must determine the eligibility of applicants. An applicant is eligible for cost share assistance when the applicant has:

1. Proof of certification, within the cost share qualifying period (October 1, 2013 through September 30, 2014) in accordance with the Organic Foods Production Act (7 U.S.C. § 6501 et seq.) and the implementing regulations of NOP (7 CFR part 205) as issued by a USDA accredited certifying agent;
2. An itemized invoice or other documentation demonstrating costs incurred for certification;
3. A certified operation is within the State's borders;
4. Completed a State Application Form (may be optional in some states); and
5. Completed a W-9 Tax Form.

8.2 ORGANIC OPERATIONS REQUESTS FOR REIMBURSEMENT

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Eligible operations must apply to the participating [State Agency](#) in which they are located to receive cost share reimbursements. Entities operating in more than one State should apply in the State where their Federal taxes are filed. These entities may only apply for reimbursements once per certificate or certification category per year, as verified by certification documentation.

Since certification expenses may be incurred between October 1, 2013 and September 30, 2014, State Agency's may set their application deadlines no earlier than October 1, 2014. At their discretion, States may continue to accept applications through December 2014. Producers and handlers should verify the application deadline of their [State Agency](#).

8.2.1 FIRST-TIME APPLICANTS/NEWLY-CERTIFIED OPERATIONS

Once an operation receives proof of USDA organic certification from an [accredited certifying agent](#), the applicant may apply for reimbursement to the [State Agency](#). Applicants should keep records of all invoices and payments for certification-related expenses. The following documents are required:

1. An organic certificate with a date, certification number and name of the certifier;
2. A State Application Form (*requirements varies by state agency, may not be required*);
3. An itemized invoice detailing allowable certification costs(*refer to [Allowable and Unallowable Costs](#)*); and
4. A [W-9 Tax Form](#).

8.2.2 RENEWAL APPLICANTS

For operations that maintain organic certification and have previously received reimbursement under either the NOCCSP or AMA, the applicant must submit a request for reimbursement to their [State Agency](#) as they incur expenses by submitting:

1. An organic certificate with a date, certification number and name of the certifier;
2. A State Application Form (*requirement varies by state agency, may not be required*); and
3. An itemized invoice detailing allowable certification costs (*refer to [Allowable and Unallowable Costs](#)*.)

8.3 VERIFICATION OF REIMBURSEMENTS

State Agencies may verify organic certification through a variety of methods including a copy of an organic certificate or verifiable communication from a USDA-accredited certifying agent. The verification document(s) must clearly identify that the certification occurred between the dates of October 1, 2013 and September 30, 2014.

8.4 STATE AGENCY REIMBURSEMENT FUNDS MANAGEMENT

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8.4.1 SF-270, REQUEST FOR ADVANCE OR REIMBURSEMENT

The State Agency must submit requests for cost share assistance fund reimbursement to the Federal Agency on SF-270, *Request for Advance or Reimbursement*. The State Agency must provide the number of applicants associated with each request for reimbursement in column 11(a) of SF-270. A Spreadsheet of Operations Reimbursed (in MS Excel) listing applicants receiving assistance from the fund allocation must be attached to the request. Indirect or overhead costs associated with the processed applications must also be described in lines 11(a-d) of SF-270. Requests for fund reimbursement without this required information will be considered incomplete and returned to the State Agency.

8.4.2 ELECTRONIC FUNDS TRANSFER (EFT) PAYMENTS

Payments will be made via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) to the bank account specified by the grantee in www.sam.gov. If your banking information is not correct or changes at any time prior to the end of your agreement, please update your registration within the System for Award Management at www.sam.gov and notify the NOP as soon as possible. This is vital to ensure proper and timely deposit of funds.

The obligation of funds may be terminated without further cause unless the grantee commences the timely drawdown of funds.

8.4.3 REIMBURSEMENT FUNDS MANAGEMENT SCHEDULE

Exhibit 3 –State Agency Reimbursement Funds Management Schedule

Action	Action Requirements	Due Date
Request Reimbursement	Submit completed SF-270, <i>Request for Advance or Reimbursement</i> to AMS-NOP .	Periodically, expected twice per year.
Obligate Funds	Grant funds should be obligated (encumbered) by the end of the grant agreement.	September 30, 2014
Disburse Funds	Grant funds must be disbursed within 90 days after the end date of the grant agreement.	Within 90 days of end of grant agreement or December 30, 2014
Unobligated Funds	Any unobligated (unencumbered) balance of cash at the end of this period must be refunded to NOP. <i>Note: Late payments are subject to an annual interest rate of 18%, penalties, and administrative charges as provided under the Debt Collection Act of 1996.</i>	Within 90 days of end of grant agreement or December 30, 2014

8.4.4 MAINTAINANCE OF FINANCIAL RECORDS

The State Agency must maintain financial records sufficient to fully disclose all activities and transactions performed under the agreement. All financial records must be in sufficient detail as to be readily understood and audited.

9.0 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

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Each State Agency must submit the reports in prescribed Exhibit 4 to [NOP](#) via email. Upon receipt of each performance report, the NOP will review the reports and communicate with the State Agency should there be any questions or concerns. Approved final performance reports become part of the official grant file.

9.1 FINAL REPORT

The final report is due to NOP at the end of the calendar year and shall include the SF-425, the Spreadsheet of Operations Reimbursed, and a Narrative Report.

9.1.1 FINAL FEDERAL FINANCIAL REPORT ([PDF](#)) ([EXCEL](#)) ([INSTRUCTIONS](#))

The form and instructions may be downloaded from www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/forms/. The appropriate State official shall sign the final Federal Financial Report (SF-425). If emailing the form, please scan the signed document and attach it to the email.

The State Agency shall prepare and submit a final report summarizing the State Agency's activities under the agreement to the Federal Agency on the SF-425. The number of applicants assisted during the year must be included on line 12 of the SF-425. If no cost share assistance was provided during the year, this information must be conveyed within the report.

9.1.2 FINAL SPREADSHEET OF OPERATIONS REIMBURSED

The State Agency shall prepare and submit a final report summarizing the total number of applicants assisted during the year. This spreadsheet (in MS Excel) lists operations receiving cost share payments within the reporting year, includes the name of the operation, the total certification expenses, and the amount paid.

9.1.3 NARRATIVE REPORT

The State Agency shall prepare and submit a narrative report, not to exceed two pages, describing activities undertaken by the State Agency and/or any subrecipients related to making cost share funds available to eligible recipients including:

1. Outreach activities carried out by the State and/or subrecipients, including the methods used to identify potential applicants, means of contact with potential applicants, and outreach materials for distribution, i.e. publications, announcements press releases, etc;
2. How applications were evaluated;
3. The number of applicants approved;
4. The number of applicants denied, with an explanation for any denial of requests for reimbursement;
5. Problems or obstacles related to reimbursement; and
6. Other items on administration of this cost share program.

9.2. STATE AGENCY REPORTING SCHEDULE

Exhibit 4 – State Agency Reporting Schedule

Report Period	Report Requirements	Due Date
Year-End Reports <i>Reports the full period of the award</i>	• Financial Report SF-425 • Spreadsheet of Operations Reimbursed • Narrative Report • Grant Close-out Activities	90 days after expiration of the grant or December 30, 2014
	• Single Audit Report or • Program Specific Audit Report	30 days within completion of audit

10 GRANT CLOSE-OUT ACTIVITIES

10.1 UNOBLIGATED FUNDS

The State Agency must refund to the Federal Agency any balance of unused funds allocated by the Federal Agency no later than 90 days after completion of the agreement. Late payments are subject to an annual interest charge of 18 per cent, penalties, and administrative charges as provided under the Debt Collection Improvement Act (DCIA) of 1996 (31 USC 3701).

10.2 AUDIT REPORTS

The State Agency is accountable for conducting an annual financial audit of the expenditures of all OCCSP funds. This requirement can be fulfilled by the Single Audit Act (A-133) or a program-specific audit in accordance with 7 CFR part 3052, "Audit of States, Local Governments, and Non-profit Organizations."

11.0 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS, INFORMATION, AND STATEMENTS

11.1 RECORD RETENTION

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In accordance with Federal regulations (7 CFR § 3016.42), grantees shall retain all records relating to the grant for a period of three years after the final financial status report has received by NOP or until final resolution of any audit finding or litigation, whichever is later. Electronic records retention is acceptable.

11.2 LIMIT OF FEDERAL LIABILITY

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The maximum obligation of the NOP to the recipient is the amount indicated in the award as obligated by NOP. Nothing in these award terms and conditions or in the other requirements of this award requires NOP to make any additional award of funds or limits its discretion with respect to the amount of funding provided for the same or any other purpose. However, in the event that an erroneous amount is stated in the award or any supporting documentation relating to the award, NOP must have unilateral right to make the correction and to make an appropriate adjustment in the NOP share of the award to align with the Federal amount authorized.

11.3 WASTE, FRAUD, AND ABUSE

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Anyone who becomes aware of the existence (or apparent existence) of fraud, waste, or abuse related to AMS OCCSP grants or use of grant funds should report this information to USDA. The USDA Office of the Inspector General (OIG) provides several means, including toll-free numbers, for this purpose. You may reach the OIG hotline by:

Office of the Inspector General, United States Department of Agriculture,
Attn: HOTLINE
PO Box 23399
Washington, DC 20026-3399

Telephone: 1-800-424-9121 (toll free) or 202-690-1202 (TDD);

Fax: 202-690-2474

E-mail: usda.hotline@oig.usda.gov

Internet: <http://www.usda.gov/oig/hotline.htm>

Fraud, waste, and abuse includes, but is not limited to, embezzlement, misuse, or misappropriation of grant funds or property, and false statements, whether by organizations or individuals. Examples are theft of grant funds for personal use; using funds for non-grant-related purposes; theft of federally owned property or property acquired or leased under a grant; charging inflated building rental fees for a building owned by the recipient; submitting false financial reports; and submitting false financial data in bids submitted to the recipient (for eventual payment under the grant). Callers are not required to give their names, and if they do, OIG keeps their identities confidential.

The Federal government may pursue administrative, civil, or criminal action under a variety of statutes that relate to fraud and false statements or claims. Even if the Federal government does not award a grant, the applicant may be subject to penalties if the information contained in or submitted as part of an application, including its certifications and assurances, is found to be false, fictitious, or fraudulent.

11.4 USDA EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY AND CIVIL RIGHTS STATEMENT

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USDA prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

In support of the Department's policy, equal employment opportunity and civil rights for all employees and clients are an essential part of all programs administered by AMS. Cooperators are strongly encouraged to develop and support an equal employment opportunity and civil rights program in carrying out the partnership created with this cooperative agreement.

11.5 AMS-NOP CONTACTS

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For questions, please call:

Organic Certification Cost Share Program Manager

Dana K. Stahl

Telephone (540) 361-1126

E-mail: Dana.Stahl@ams.usda.gov

OR

Organic Certification Cost Share Program Coordinator

Rita Meade

Telephone (202) 260-8636

E-mail: Rita.Meade@ams.usda.gov

Address:

USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service
Attn: Organic Certification Cost Share Programs
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
STOP 0268
Room 2648 South Building
Washington, DC 20250-0268

Main Line: (202) 720-3252

NOP prefers that all forms and reports, with the exception of the AMS-33 are sent via email; however, U.S. mail is acceptable.

APPENDIX A

SF-424, "APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE" (PDF) (INSTRUCTIONS)

Most information blocks on the required form are either self-explanatory or adequately explained in the instructions. However, the following supplemental instructions associated with specific blocks on Form SF-424 should be used for OCCSP applications.

Block	Instruction
#1 Type of Submission	Check " Application "
#2 Type of Application	Check " New "
#4 and #5	Not applicable
#6 b Project Description	Include the names of the grant programs your State Agency is participating in, NOCCSP and/or the AMA .
# 8c Organizational DUNS	Applicant Information-refers to the State agency submitting the application and to the employee responsible for the project. Obtaining a DUNS Number, A Guide for Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Applicants.
#8d Address	Enter the State Agency's street address. P.O. Boxes will not be accepted. Enter a 9-digit zip code.
#10 Name of Federal Agency	USDA-AMS-NOP
#11 Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number	Enter " 10.171 " for the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number. Title of Program is " Organic Certification Cost Share Program ".
#12 Funding Opportunity Number	Enter " USDA-AMS-NOP-2014 " for the funding opportunity number. Title – " Organic Certification Cost Share Program ".
#13 Competition Identification Number	Not applicable
#14 Areas Affected by Project	Enter state affected by project
#15 Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project	Enter " [XXX] State Department of Agriculture – FY 2014 State Plan "
#16a Congressional Districts for Applicant	Enter the Congressional district where your main office is located.
#16b Congressional Districts for Program/Project	Enter the Congressional district where your project is performed. Provide " All " if the projects will be performed in more than one location.
#17 Proposed Project Start Date and End Date	State Date: " October 1, 2013 " End Date: " September 30, 2014 "
#18 Estimated Funding	Estimated Funding categories include: Federal = Total Organic Certification Cost Share Program funds allocated
#19 Is Applicant Subject to Review by State Under Executive Order 12372 Process?	To determine if your State plan is subject to review under State Executive order 12372, consult the following website: http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc/ .