

For: State and County Offices

Accepting and Rejecting General CRP Signup 60 Offers

Approved by: Acting Deputy Administrator, Farm Programs



1 Overview

A Background

All submitted CRP offers received during general CRP signup 60 were evaluated based on the summary score of five environmental factors, and cost. Of the 1,185,888 acres offered, the Secretary has determined 1,065,409 acres are acceptable and may be enrolled with a start date of October 1, 2023, for program year 2024. The national average annual rental rate per acre for the acceptable acreage is \$64 per acre.

The maximum possible Environmental Benefits Index (EBI) score was 545. The following points were given:

- 395 for the five environmental factors
- 150 for the cost factor.

Offers with an EBI score of 184 or greater were determined basically acceptable.

Notes: See subparagraphs 2 B and C for exceptions.

To the maximum extent practicable, the Secretary allocates acres according to historical State enrollment rates using enrolled acres from 2007 through 2016.

Disposal Date	Distribution
January 1, 2024	State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices, NRCS State Offices, and Forest Service

Notice CRP-999

1 Overview (Continued)

A Background (Continued)

As a result of this selection, acreage under some CRP-1's that are scheduled to expire on September 30, 2023, will not be re-enrolled. Producers on these acres may need:

- technical assistance preparing expiring CRP acreage for crop production.
- information about:
 - conservation compliance requirements
 - early land preparation policies
 - enrolling in continuous CRP or ARC/PLC, if applicable.

B Purpose

This notice provides:

- instructions for accessing a list of acceptable and rejected offers, by administrative county, for each offer submitted for general CRP signup 60
- instructions and guidance for States identified as not meeting historical State enrollment rates
- additional guidance on policies about:
 - acreage revisions
 - withdrawing offers
 - erroneous SRR's
 - succession-in-interest
 - signature requirements
 - maximum payment rate revisions
 - establishing CRP practices
 - 25 percent county cropland limitation
 - CRP and ARC/PLC
- key completion dates (Exhibit 1)
- counties at or over 20 percent of the 25 percent county cropland limitation (Exhibit 2)
- updated CRP-23 letter (Exhibit 3)
- updated CRP-26 letter (Exhibit 4).

Notice CRP-999

2 Offer Selection Overview

A Selection Process

All eligible general CRP signup 60 offers submitted using the Conservation Online System (COLS) by COB April 21, 2023, have been ranked.

County Offices must handle **eligible** general CRP signup 60 offers **not** successfully submitted using COLS by COB April 21, 2023, as omitted offers.

Erroneous and omitted offers must be processed according to 2-CRP, paragraph 339. Offers not successfully submitted using COLS by COB April 7, 2023, or processed from a register no later than April 21, 2023, are considered omitted offers. See 4-CRP for procedure for automated processing of erroneous and omitted offers. See 1-APP for handling appeals.

Important: Late-filed offers are **not** omitted offers. Both CRP-1 and CRP-2 must be completed and signed by an eligible producer and received in the County Office by COB April 21, 2023, to constitute an offer. CRP-1 or CRP-2 alone does **not** constitute an offer.

All offers in a submitted status in COLS were ranked using the national ranking plan according to:

- 2-CRP, paragraph 293
- the national EBI using the formula: $EBI = N1 + N2 + N3 + N4 + N5 + N6$.

The maximum possible EBI score is 545 points, which was developed using:

- 395 points maximum for environmental factors N1 through N5
- 150 points maximum for cost factor N6.

Scoring parameters for N1 through N5 are in 2-CRP, paragraph 293, and Exhibit 26. The score for N6 was calculated using 150 points for cost. This cost factor is comprised of the sum of 2 subfactors.

Subfactor N6a is awarded points according to the formula: $N6a = (1 - (\text{per acre offer rate}/240)) \times 125$. This subfactor is rounded to the nearest whole number using normal rules of rounding. Therefore, the maximum points available for subfactor N6a are 125.

Subfactor N6b is awarded points, according to Exhibit 26, for every **whole percentage** the producer offered below the calculated maximum payment rate, not to exceed 25 points.

Example: If the calculated maximum payment rate for an offer is \$75 per acre and the producer offered a rental rate of \$68 per acre, the offer would be awarded 18 points for subfactor N6b.

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2 Offer Selection Overview (Continued)

A Selection Process (Continued)

The score for the N6 factor is calculated using the formula: $N6 = (N6a + N6b)$.

Example: The cost factor (N6) calculation for an offer of \$68 per acre with a calculated maximum payment rate of \$75 is:

$$N6 = (1 - (68/240)) \times 125 + 18$$

$$N6 = 108.$$

Note: The rental rate per acre offered is the value from CRP-2, item 9.

For counties impacted by the total 25 percent county cropland limitation, see paragraph 7.

B National EBI Cutoff Score

Offers with an EBI score greater than or equal to the national EBI cutoff level of 184 points were determined basically acceptable. All other offers were rejected. See subparagraph 2 C for EBI cutoff for States not meeting historical State enrollment rates.

Exceptions: In several counties, the total number of cropland acres determined acceptable plus the cropland acres currently enrolled in CRP scheduled to expire after September 30, 2023, and cropland enrolled in ACEP-WRE would have exceeded the applicable 25 percent county cropland limitation.

The general CRP signup 60 offers determined acceptable in these counties, when combined with the existing cropland enrolled in CRP as of October 1, 2023, and cropland enrolled in ACEP-WRE, were limited to the applicable 25 percent county cropland limit for that county. As a result, some additional offers were rejected. The effective EBI cutoff level in these counties will be higher than the national 184 cutoff level.

Note: See subparagraph 7 B for information about determining acceptability of offers based on local preference.

2 Offer Selection Overview (Continued)

C EBI Cutoff Score for States Identified as Not Meeting Historical State Enrollment Rates

Offers with an EBI score greater than or equal to 174 points were determined basically acceptable for the following States only:

- Alabama
- Arkansas
- Delaware
- Florida
- Georgia
- Indiana
- Iowa
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Maryland
- Minnesota
- Mississippi
- New York
- North Carolina
- North Dakota
- Ohio
- Pennsylvania
- South Carolina
- South Dakota
- Tennessee
- Virginia
- Wisconsin.

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3 Accessing and Reviewing Offer Ranking Reports

A Accessing Offer Ranking Reports

Offer ranking reports will be provided in a State Excel spreadsheet by administrative county. The State Excel spreadsheet will be available at [FPAC-FSA-CD-State - General Signup 60 Acceptable-Rejected Lists - All Documents \(sharepoint.com\)](#).

Only State Offices will be able to access the SharePoint site. State Offices must access the ranking report and provide the appropriate county sheet located within the State Excel spreadsheet to County Offices.

Notes: The offer ranking report includes a “Status” column which indicates whether the offer was determined acceptable or rejected. Offers will be rejected if the offer is less than the EBI cutoff score or if the county for which the offered land is physically located has reached or exceeds the 25 percent county cropland limit.

B Reviewing Offer Ranking Reports

Before notifying producers of the results of the offer selection, County Offices must compare the offer data in the offer ranking report for each offer listed with the corresponding CRP-1 and CRP-2 data to ensure:

- all eligible offers submitted are listed in the report
- the data on each offer record listed in the report is correct.

Offers with incorrect ranking factors, conservation practices, soils, rental rates, or other data which could affect EBI scores will be handled as erroneous offers according to paragraph 4.

C Mail Merging Accepted and Rejected Reports

Each offer’s primary contact information has been added to the accepted and rejected reports for each administrative county. This information may be used by county offices to create mail merges to auto fill information for the accepted letter, rejected letters, and labels for envelopes. Instructions on how to use this information for mail merge has been provided on SharePoint [FPAC-FSA-CD-State - General Signup 60 Acceptable-Rejected Lists - All Documents \(sharepoint.com\)](#).

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4 Errors, Omissions, and Appeals

A Software

COLS software was disabled at COB April 21, 2023, to accommodate national offer ranking analysis. The software will be reopened, for processing errors, omissions, and appeals. At that time, COLS will calculate and display EBI subfactor N6a and the total EBI must be used to determine whether corrected or newly entered offers are acceptable.

B Procedure

Erroneous and omitted offers must be processed according to 2-CRP, paragraph 339. Offers not successfully submitted using COLS by COB April 21, 2023, or processed from a register no later than April 21, 2023, are considered omitted offers. See 4-CRP for procedure for automated processing of erroneous and omitted offers. See 1-APP for handling appeals.

Important: Late-filed offers are **not** omitted offers. Both CRP-1 and CRP-2 must be completed and signed by an eligible producer and received in the County Office by COB April 21, 2023, to constitute an offer. CRP-1 or CRP-2 alone does **not** constitute an offer.

C Incomplete Offers Due to Ineligible EI

As a part of the transition to the use of new erosion tools for calculating erodibility and determining land eligibility, a process is being developed for Signup 60 only to provide producers the opportunity to have offers with ineligible land due to low EI reconsidered under Errors and Omissions. A future notice providing specific guidance for these offers will be published as soon as possible. County Offices must not delete any TERRA scenarios or COLS offers as all information contained on initiated scenarios and incomplete offers with ineligible land will be requested if the producer is interested in pursuing reconsideration.

5 Policies About Acceptable and Rejected Offers

A Acreage Revisions and Measurement Service

Producers with certain acceptable offers that request an in-field measurement are required to pay for measurement service to determine the actual acreage being enrolled. A measurement service must be performed by the County Office and paid for by the producer according to 2-CRP, subparagraph 401 B and 2-CP (Rev.16).

If acreage adjustments to the offer result from the measurement service, the revised offer must be modified in COLS software according to subparagraph 4 B.

Note: The boundary of the acreage offered must **not** change.

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5 Policies About Acceptable and Rejected Offers (Continued)

B Withdrawing Acceptable Offers

Producers with acceptable offers have **15 calendar days** from the date of CRP-23 to notify the County Office about whether they want to continue with the offer to participate. Partial withdrawals are **not** acceptable. If a producer fails to respond in **15 calendar days**, or chooses not to continue with the offer, the County Office must notate the producer's response to the notification letter in the producer's CRP folder. Liquidated damages do not apply.

Note: Producers are not required to notify the County Office in writing. However, the County Office must note the producer's response in the CRP folder. See 2-CRP, paragraph 341.

D Correcting SRR Errors

For acceptable offers, errors detected in Map Unit Symbols (MUSYM's), MUSYM acreages, SRR determinations, or other errors in calculations used to determine the maximum payment rates for individual offers, must be corrected by the County Office. Producers must be notified of the error and be provided an opportunity to:

- revise the CRP offer based on the corrected payment rate calculation, if the maximum payment rate changed

Note: The revision must be completed in the COLS software. Changes in maximum payment rates may also affect N6a and N6b cost factors and final EBI scores. If the new EBI score falls below the EBI cutoff, the offer must be rejected.

- withdraw the offer without assessment of liquidated damages.

E Succession-in-Interest Policy

Refer to 2-CRP, paragraph 338 for succession-in-interest policy for offers.

F Signature Requirements

See 2-CRP, paragraph 335 for requirements on obtaining signatures.

G Changing CRP-2 Data on Rejected Offers

Producers are **not** allowed to change any CRP-2 data, including the rental rate per acre offered or the practice offered, after the offer is determined rejected.

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6 Establishing CRP Practices and Other Conservation Measures

A Policy

Planting time spans for each practice are included in 2-CRP, Exhibit 11.

Certain producers agreed to conservation measures that maximized EBI points. All conservation plans must be consistent with:

- the offer
- standards and specifications for the practice.

Example: To obtain 50 points under EBI subfactor N1a, the producer offered to establish CP2 with a mixed stand of at least 3 native grasses and at least 1 forb, shrub, or legume best suited for wildlife in the area. The conservation plan must reflect the required number and type of species required and the producer's agreement to these requirements.

B Timing for New Acreage

2-CRP, subparagraph 426 B provides that producers may begin establishing approved practices after:

- submitting the offer to the County Office
- completing environmental review as provided in subparagraph 367 F
- being notified the CRP-1 has been approved.

Producers must be notified that starting a practice before final approval of CRP-1 is at the producer's own risk.

Important: Cost share must **not** be paid unless CRP-1 is approved and the cover meets the standards and specifications of the practice.

C Timing for Reoffered CRP Acreage

After the new CRP-1 is approved, participants who offered existing CRP acreage may immediately begin establishing approved practices without being in violation of the existing CRP-1. Participants may remove the existing cover if required in the conservation plan. Haying and grazing is permitted according to the conservation plan and 2-CRP, Part 19.

Participants must be notified that starting a practice before final approval of new CRP-1 is at the participant's own risk.

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6 Establishing or Modifying CRP Practices and Other Conservation Measures (Continued)

D Other Information About Conservation Plans

NRCS or TSP has the technical responsibility to develop conservation plans. Nationally, NRCS has agreed to complete all conservation plans and return to FSA by August 11, 2023. All conservation plans must be developed according to 2-CRP, Part 11, and Exhibit 11. County Offices will provide documents necessary to complete conservation plans, according to 2-CRP, subparagraph 341 D, to NRCS or TSP within 5 business days of notification by the producer that the producer wants to continue with the offer.

Note: State Forester on behalf of the Forest Service must provide a tree planting/thinning plan for those practices the Forest Service has technical responsibility to be included in the conservation plan.

7 County Cropland Limitation

A Applying County Cropland Limit

The National Office has applied the 25 percent county cropland limitation based on the physical location of the acreage offered. The ranking reports referenced in paragraph 3 reflect which offers have been rejected because of the 25 percent county cropland limitation.

The 25 percent county cropland limitation is applied to each applicable separate sub-County Office based on the cropland in the subcounty area. The following counties are divided into 2 or more subcounty areas.

State	Subcounty	State	Subcounty
Iowa	East Pottawattamie	Minnesota	East Otter Tail
	West Pottawattamie		West Otter Tail
			East Polk
			West Polk
Maine	Houlton		North Saint Louis
	Aroostook		South Saint Louis
	Fort Kent	Ohio	East Lucas
			West Lucas

B Local Preference

Exhibit 2 provides a list of counties at or over 20 percent of the 25 percent county cropland limitation.

Any county listed in Exhibit 2 will not have omitted offers ranked by the COLS software. For tie breaking, the National Office ranked offers with identical EBI scores in the following order:

- local preference
- ascending rent
- ascending offer acreage.

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8 CRP and DCP Cropland Policy

A Sufficient DCP Cropland

Before notifying any producer that an offer was determined acceptable, the County Office must ensure that the offered CRP acreage, excluding marginal pastureland, does not exceed the farm's effective DCP cropland plus double-cropped acres minus base acres. Base acres may need to be reduced because of participation in CRP.

B Restoration of Base Acres

When base acres are restored from CRP (expired, voluntarily terminated, or early released only), a farm must have sufficient effective DCP cropland to accommodate the restoration of those base acres. Enrollment in ARC/PLC is not allowed when the sum of the base acres exceeds the effective DCP cropland plus double-cropped acres.

C ARC/PLC Election of Restored Base Acres

If the restoration of base acres results in the addition of a covered commodity's base acres where base acres did not exist before the election, a manual CCC-866-1 must be completed before the restoration and within 30 calendar days from the notification to complete an election. See 1-ARCPLC (Rev 1), paragraph 283.5.

Note: The election must be completed before loading the restored base acres into Farm Records because software requires the entry of an election when base acres are added to a farm.

9 Action

A Processing Acceptable and Rejected Offers

To process acceptable and rejected general signup 60 offers, County Offices must:

- set workload priorities and plan office activities to devote all available resources to CRP
- access and review the offer data according to paragraph 3 and 2-CRP, paragraph 341
- for all offers which are not erroneous, after all data and eligibility reviews, immediately notify producers of their acceptable and rejected offers according to this notice using CRP-23 and CRP-26 (2-CRP, Exhibit 5).

Notice CRP-999

9 Action (Continued)

A Processing Acceptable and Rejected Offers (Continued)

Notes: Decisions issued using CRP-26 must include appeal rights to COC according to 1-APP.

As a cost savings measure, County Offices should consider notifying producers through email by scanning and emailing CRP-23's and CRP-26's with return receipt. If return receipt is not received by the County Office within 15 calendar days, County Offices will contact producers or mail CRP-23 and CRP-26's to producers. The original scanned notification form will be retained with the offer.

When scanning and emailing CRP-26 to producers, include the web address for the fact sheet about continuous signup located at [crp-continuous-enrollment-period-factsheet.pdf \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/programs/conservation-programs/continuous-enrollment-period-factsheet)

When mailing CRP-26 to producers, include the fact sheet about continuous CRP signup provisions. See subparagraph C for additional procedure for rejected offers.

- notify producers of CRP-1 approval using CRP-24 (2-CRP, Exhibit 5)
- upon request, release all general information used to calculate payment rates and EBI scores. Do **not** release information about individual offers or producers prohibited by 2-INFO.

B Preparing CRP-1 for Approval

To prepare CRP-1 for approval, County Offices must review 2-CRP, Part 12 for activities to complete before approving CRP-1.

Notice CRP-999

9 Action (Continued)

C Assisting Producers With Rejected Offers

County Offices, with NRCS assistance, must assist producers whose offers were not determined acceptable with:

- technical assistance for returning acreage back into production, if applicable,
- conservation compliance provisions
- understanding how their offer could have been adjusted to be more competitive
- information about enrolling continuous CRP or ARC/PLC, if applicable.

D State Office Action

State Offices will:

- set workload priorities and plan office activities to meet the key completion deadlines announced in this notice
- ensure that all applicable County Offices:
 - review and properly follow the processes in this notice
 - begin notifying producers immediately upon completing required actions described in this notice.

Note: Report County Offices that have not begun notifying producers according to subparagraph A and provide the reason to the Director, CD,
Attn: Beverly Preston, by noon e.t. Tuesday, June 20, 2023.

Additional general CRP signup 60 summary information will be posted and may be obtained from the following link <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/conservation-programs/reports-and-statistics/conservation-reserve-program-statistics/index>.

Key Completion Dates

Key dates in processing general CRP signup 60 offers are identified in the following table.

Action	Completion Date
County Offices must review offers on the ranking reports and conduct eligibility and data reviews according to subparagraph 3 B and 2-CRP, paragraph 341, to detect any erroneous and omitted records.	Immediately upon receipt of this notice and not later than June 20, 2023.
County Offices must begin notifying producers with acceptable and rejected offers.	Immediately upon completing actions required in subparagraph 8 A. No later than noon on June 20, 2023.
County Offices provide documents necessary to complete conservation plans, according to 2-CRP, subparagraph 341 D, to NRCS or TSP.	Within 5 business days of notification by producer that the producer wants to continue with the offer.
Conservation plans must be completed and approved by NRCS and returned to FSA.	No later than August 11, 2023.
CRP-1's must be approved by CED or COC and entered in COLS.	No later than COB September 29, 2023. There is no statutory authority to approve contracts after COB September 29, 2023.


Counties at or Over 20 Percent of the 25 Percent County Cropland Limitation

If all acceptable offers for general CRP signup are approved, the following counties are at or over 20 percent of the 25 percent county cropland limitation.

State	County	Current Percent of County Cropland Enrolled in CRP/ACEP-WRE
Texas	Andrews	27.19%
Texas	Bailey	24.93%
Michigan	Chippewa	24.92%
Colorado	Crowley	24.54%
Oregon	Gilliam	24.42%
Colorado	Baca	24.24%
Colorado	Pueblo	23.74%
Idaho	Bannock	23.11%
Nebraska	Kimball	22.95%
Kansas	Morton	22.63%
Washington	Douglas	22.52%
Texas	Cochran	22.46%
Idaho	Power	22.17%
Colorado	Kiowa	22.12%
Texas	Gaines	22.11%
New Mexico	Quay	22.10%
Louisiana	Tensas	22.05%
Kansas	Hamilton	21.39%
Mississippi	Oktibbeha	21.17%
Louisiana	Concordia	21.16%
Oregon	Sherman	21.11%
Mississippi	Grenada	21.07%
Texas	Swisher	21.05%
Texas	Hockley	20.94%
Texas	Deaf Smith	20.67%
Colorado	Bent	20.40%
Colorado	Prowers	20.34%
Texas	Lamb	20.28%
Michigan	Mackinac	20.19%

Updated CRP-23

An example of the updated CRP-23 letter is provided below. The link to the form is <https://emso-sa.fsa.usda.gov/dps/services/downloadhandler.ashx?fileid=43698>.

 <p>United States Department of Agriculture</p>	<p>Farm Production and Conservation</p>	<p>Farm Service Agency</p>	<p>State county name or organizational unit Mail stop code and/or room number P.O. Box or Street Address City, State, ZIP Code</p>
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NOTICE REGARDING ACCEPTABLE CRP OFFERS

Date: (MM-DD-YYYY) _____

Dear: _____

This notice is to inform you that your offer on tract _____ under the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) has been determined acceptable by FSA.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) or Technical Service Provider (TSP) must develop a conservation plan, approved by the Conservation District, and signed by all signatories on the CRP contract offer to participate in the CRP. So that we may continue to process your offer, you should continue to work with NRCS or TSP to obtain the required plan on the acreage which is subject to the offer. Your offer cannot be approved by the County Committee without an approved conservation plan.

Practices to be carried out under CRP may be started with the understanding that cost-share payments will **not** be made if the practice is not included in the approved conservation plan.

You have 15 days from the date of this letter to notify this office of whether you want your offer approved to participate in the CRP so that NRCS or TSP may begin plan development. If I do not hear from you within the 15-day period, we will reject your offer.

The same acreage cannot be enrolled under CRP and Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage (ARC/PLC). The total of the CRP and ARC/PLC acres on a farm cannot exceed the total eligible land for the program on the farm. The owner of the land offered for CRP may be required to reduce all or a portion of ARC/PLC acreage before CRP-1 will be approved. Please contact the _____ County FSA Office for more information.


Sincerely,

County Executive Director

CRP-23 (04-24-23)

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

An example of the updated CRP-26 letter is provided below. The link to the form is <https://emso-sa.fsa.usda.gov/dps/services/downloadhandler.ashx?fileid=43910>.

 <p>United States Department of Agriculture</p>	<p>Farm Production and Conservation</p>	<p>Farm Service Agency</p>	<p>State/county name or organizational unit Mail stop code and/or room number P.O. Box or Street Address City, State, ZIP Code</p>
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NOTICE OF UNACCEPTABLE OFFER

Date: *(MM-DD-YYYY)* _____

Dear: _____

Thank you for your offer to place land in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Your offer on tract number _____ to participate in the _____ (signup type) CRP was not accepted because:

- Environmental Benefits Too Low
- Grassland Ranking Score Too Low
- Land Determined Ineligible
- Payment Rate Offered Exceeded the Maximum Payment Rate
- County Cropland Limitation Has Been Reached
- Existing Restrictive Easement
- 1-Year Ownership/Operatorship Eligibility Not Met
- Ineligible Cropping History
- Landowner/Tenant Provision Not Met
- Other
- Offer exceeds maximum available acreage allocation for the practice.

If you feel that all the facts have not been considered in your case, you may: _____

You need to provide factual information and reasons why you believe this determination is not correct.

Although your offer was not accepted, you may be eligible for the continuous sign-up of high priority conservation practices such as filterstrips, riparian buffers, grass waterways, shelter-belts, field wind breaks, living snow fences, contour grass strips, salt tolerant vegetation, or shallow water areas for wildlife. I have enclosed a copy of a FSA continuous signup fact sheet. Please contact our office if you are interested.

It may be possible that your offer may be modified to increase the likelihood of acceptance in a future signup by:

- increasing the environmental benefits score for general signup or
- increasing the grassland ranking score for grassland signup.

** (Insert appeal rights to COC according to I-APP)*

Sincerely,

County Executive Director

Enclosures

CRP-26 (06-05-23)

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.