

Georgia Agricultural Landowners' Guide



*Highlighting Available
Financial and
Technical Assistance
Opportunities For
Protecting Georgia
Farmlands and
Livelihoods*

Acknowledgements:

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INTRODUCTION

Georgia has been blessed with a long and productive agricultural history. It began when early Native American inhabitants started cultivating crops and settling lands instead of being nomadic hunters and gatherers. Through time, it progressed to the first commercial cotton production in 1734 and has advanced to today's modern crop and livestock farming systems. A major contributor to Georgia's agricultural success is its humid subtropical climate with mild winters, adequate water resources and diverse soil types.

Since the beginning of farming, many changes have created challenges that threaten the agricultural producer's way of life. Degradation of natural resources on agricultural lands and pressure from commercial and residential development are just a few of the issues modern farmers in Georgia face. Today, agriculture contributes about twelve percent of Georgia's economic output with one out of every seven Georgians making a living off of the land. Farmers, as well as other Georgians, recognize the importance of natural resource conservation in protecting the land and this vital industry for future generations.

This guide provides an overview of incentives and programs that can help Georgia's producers pursue conservation options and improve the productivity of their land, as well as some basic information that can help them operate a successful business enterprise. The information is presented in the following four sections:

- **Section I. Farmland Protection**
- **Section II. Tax Reductions, Loans, and Grant Programs**
- **Section III. Natural Resource Conservation Programs**
- **Section IV. Agency and Organization Contact Information**



Several State and Federal agencies appear repeatedly through this guide. The following is a description of these entities:

USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS): This federal agency is dedicated to working with agricultural landowners and communities to improve our soil, water, air, plants, wildlife and energy use. They have many voluntary programs that offer technical and financial assistance to producers interested in conservation practices on their own private lands.

USDA-Rural Development (RD): This federal agency is committed to helping improve the economy and quality of life in rural America. They promote economic development by supporting loans and grants to businesses through various lenders. They also offer technical assistance to agricultural producers and help cooperatives get started and improve the effectiveness of their operations.

USDA-Farm Services Agency (FSA): This federal agency equitably serves all farmers, ranchers, and agricultural partners through the delivery of effective, efficient agricultural programs for all Americans. This service often comes in the form of financial assistance through loans, or cost-share programs to help producers achieve their conservation and business goals.

Georgia Forestry Commission (GFC): The Georgia Forestry Commission (GFC) is a dynamic state agency responsible for providing leadership, service, and education in the protection and conservation of Georgia's forest resources. Commission professionals provide a wide variety of services including fire detection, wildfire suppression and prevention services and forest management assistance to landowners and communities.

Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission(GASWCC): This state entity provides program oversight for locally led Soil and Water Conservation Districts, as well as various types of assistance to landowners and all levels of government in order to help maintain, conserve, and wisely use the soil and water resources of Georgia. They also regularly provide soil and water resource education and information across the state. Wherever you are in Georgia, the local Soil and Water Conservation District can be a valuable asset to help you manage your farmland.

This guide also emphasizes programs and opportunities designed for “Historically Underserved Producers”. This group includes beginning, socially disadvantaged and limited resource farmers or ranchers. The NRCS definitions for these groups are as follows (other organizations’ definitions may differ):

Beginning Farmer or Rancher

A Beginning Farmer or Rancher means an individual or entity who:

- a. Has not operated a farm or ranch, or who has operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10 consecutive years. This requirement applies to all members of an entity.
- b. Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm or ranch.
 1. In the case of a contract with an individual, individually or with the immediate family, material and substantial participation requires that the individual provide substantial day-to-day labor and management of the farm or ranch, consistent with the practices in the county or state where the farm is located.
 2. In the case of a contract with an entity, all members must materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm or ranch. Material and substantial participation requires that each of the members provide some amount of the management, or labor and management necessary for day-to-day activities, such that if each of the members did not provide these inputs, operation of the farm or ranch would be seriously impaired.

Socially Disadvantaged Producer

A socially disadvantaged group is a group whose members have been subject to racial or ethnic prejudice because of their identity as members of a group, without regard to their individual qualities. These groups consist of the following:

- American Indians or Alaskan Natives
- Asians
- Blacks or African Americans
- Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders
- Hispanics

A socially disadvantaged applicant is an individual or entity who is a member of a socially disadvantaged group. For an entity, at least 50 percent ownership in the farm business must be held by socially disadvantaged individuals.

Note: Gender alone is not a covered group for the purposes of NRCS conservation programs.

Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher

A Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher or Forest Owner is an applicant:

With direct or indirect gross farm sales not more than the current indexed value in each of the previous two years, and who has a total household income at or below the national poverty level for a family of four, or less than 50 percent of county median household income in each of the previous two years.

An entity or joint operation can be a Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher if all individual members independently qualify.

Conservation programs, natural resource agencies, and the laws governing agriculture and land ownership are dynamic by nature. Therefore, information presented in this publication may change from year to year. Please use the contact information located throughout this publication and in the last section to acquire the most updated information.

Section 1: Farmland Protection

Georgia has experienced a population explosion over the past few decades, with an almost 20 percent increase from 2000 – 2010. The national growth average was less than 10 percent, which indicates that Georgia is growing at a rate far exceeding many areas of the nation. With this growth comes inevitable development pressure placed on our traditionally agricultural areas. In fact, according to American Farmland Trust, Georgia loses about 50 acres of farmland per day.

Widespread development pressure is a relatively new hardship placed on producers in Georgia. Many farmers are seeking ways to ensure that they can continue working the land despite the changes, as well as ensure that their children receive the same opportunity. The following measures and programs offer landowners choices to help protect their farmland for future generations.



Protective Measures for Farmland

Right to Farm

Georgia's Right to Farm Law gives farms that have been in operation for more than one year some protection against nuisance complaints. Many nuisance complaints originate from residential areas that result from urban development occurring in traditionally agricultural lands. Before this law, nuisance actions sometimes resulted in producers having to cease their operations. It was also found that many farmers were hesitant to make investments on their property by expanding or adding new technologies. The purpose of this law was to reduce the losses of the state's agricultural and forest land resources by limiting the circumstances that nuisance complaints can be filed.

After an agriculture operation has been underway for one year, it cannot be a nuisance as a result of changed conditions in or around the operation. This applies even if there is an expansion in the operation or a change in technology. It does not apply when a nuisance results from negligent, improper or illegal operation of a facility.

Estate Planning

Traditionally, most farms are passed down through the generations. The transition, as well as planning for the transition, is becoming more and more challenging. Despite the challenges, it is also increasingly important that the issue be addressed. Estate planning can provide for the needs of all family members, even if they do not plan on participating in the farm's operation. It can also reduce inheritance taxes associated with higher land values due to development pressure or simple inflation. In addition, it can help address settlement issues before they materialize.

According to American Farmland Trust, a will is an important part of an estate plan, but does not by itself secure the future of the family's land and farm business. They advise all estate plans to accomplish at least four goals:

- Transferring ownership and management of the agricultural operation, land and other assets;
- Avoiding income, gift and estate taxes;
- Ensuring financial security and peace of mind for all generations; and
- Developing the next generation's management capacity.

For more information about estate planning, visit the Rolling Hills RC & D website to find "Planning the Future of Your Farm" at rollinghillsrcd.org, or visit American Farmland Trust's website at www.farmland.org.

Conservation Easements

An easement is a voluntary agreement that restricts the use of a defined piece of property. The donor (landowner) retains ownership of the property; however, its use is restricted based on the specifics of the agreement. Agricultural Conservation Easements can permanently prevent subdivision, mining or other non-agricultural development while still allowing for agricultural use. Other types of easements can be more restrictive, essentially preserving the land's natural character from all uses aside from those such as controlling public access and quiet enjoyment.

In order for a producer to place an easement on a portion of his or her farm, they must find a governmental or conservation organization (See "Land Trusts" in Section 4) that will agree to audit the property. This ensures that the easement will be adhered to throughout the length of the agreement (sometimes permanent).

Assurance of the protection of farmland is not the only incentive for a producer to donate an agricultural easement. These agreements also often result in significant deductions at the federal and state level (See Section 2). Interested farmers can contact a local Land Trust for more information about easement options. These organizations are a common type of non-governmental entity that specializes in conservation easements. Government programs also exist as a means to assist property owners through the process, both technically and financially. The following section describes various federal and state easement programs that offer this much needed assistance.

Federal and State Easement Programs

This portion of Section 1 describes available programs that involve conservation easements. A property owner who enters an easement gives up certain property rights to a defined area but retains ownership. In return the owner may receive compensation for the lost property rights, significant tax deductions (see Section 2) and the security of knowing the future of the defined area. Individual programs differ with respect to land use restrictions, easement duration and benefits to the donor.

For property owners who have no experience with conservation easements, the learning process can seem daunting. Luckily for Georgians, the Georgia Land Conservation Program (GLCP) exists to help property owners understand conservation easements, and possibly even refer you to a local land trust. The GLCP contact information can be found in Section 4. In addition, interested property owners should consult with a tax advisor, real estate attorney or accountant for good advice about the process and any tax benefits associated with conservation easements.



Photo Courtesy of USDA-NRCS

Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP)

The FRPP was authorized by the 1996 Farm Bill, and is administered by the NRCS with the ultimate goal of protecting agricultural land and its natural conservation values. With increased pressures from suburban development in many areas, conflicts have arisen resulting in pressure on farmers. In addition, concerns have been raised that family farms may eventually be sold for development. By entering into this program, the landowner agrees that the property will, at a minimum, be protected from impervious surfaces (parking lots, roads, etc.), subdivision and mining. Other prohibited uses include, but are not limited to, non-agricultural industrial and commercial operations, non-agricultural construction and waste dumping.

The NRCS works through State, Tribal and local governments and non-governmental organizations to conduct the FRPP. In order for a landowner to participate, a farm and ranch land protection program must be made available in the area by one of the previously mentioned entities. There are also other requirements that the proposed easement property must meet. Ultimately, participation in this program will protect

agricultural productivity, preserve farmland for future generations and protect any historic or archaeological sites from future development.

For more information about the Farm and Ranch Land Program, contact a NRCS representative at your local USDA Service Center.

Grassland Reserve Program (GRP)

Similar to the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program, the GRP is suitable for landowners interested in protecting their grazing land from future development. Authorized by the 1985 Farm Bill, the NRCS administers the program through cooperating entities such as State, Tribal and local governments or non-governmental agencies. In order for a landowner to participate, an existing Grassland Reserve Program must be available from one of these entities. GRP provides for permanent easements or rental agreement contracts for 10, 15, and 20 year periods.

For more information about the Grassland Reserve Program, contact a NRCS representative at your local USDA Service Center.

Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)

This voluntary program is administered by the NRCS. It is designed to restore, enhance, and/or protect wetlands on private land. The purpose of entering into this easement is to maximize the environmental value of the wetland by providing habitat for wetland plants, migratory birds and other wetland-dependent organisms. This program also enhances water quality on adjacent lands. Although agricultural production is not allowed on lands enrolled in the WRP, these lands are usually enrolled partially because they are poorly suited for production.

In order to participate, applicants must create a Preliminary Restoration Plan. This plan specifies the way that the land shall be restored, protected, enhanced, maintained and

Success Story – Southeast Georgia

When the Edgy family set out to restore wetlands on their property, they knew they had to find a way to do it with limited funds. They contacted the NRCS, who helped them find the financial and technical assistance they needed to protect their area. The WRP helped the Edgys restore and protect, through a perpetual easement, 720 acres around the Satilla River. That land and over 3,000 more acres have been in the family for over 100 years. Although parts of the property have been used as timber land for years, their family has always been conservation minded. “Water is our future. It’s our life. If we don’t protect it, we’ll wish we had in the future,” Mike Edgy said.

Story courtesy of USDA-NRCS



managed to accomplish the goals of the program. Although certain property rights are lost after entering the easement and following the plan, the landowner does retain certain rights. These include title to the property, control of public access, quiet enjoyment, certain recreational uses and water rights.

For more information about the Wetlands Reserve Program, contact a NRCS representative at your local USDA Service Center.

Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWPP)

The EWPP is administered by the NRCS with the goal of purchasing floodplain easements as an emergency measure. Through this process, a landowner voluntarily sells a permanent conservation easement to the NRCS who would have the full authority to restore the floodplain's functions and values. The landowner receives a payment in exchange for the easement. The landowner also retains several rights to the property including quiet enjoyment, the right to control public access and the right to undeveloped recreational use such as hunting and fishing.

To qualify for this program, the floodplain must have experienced an impairment in the last 12 months or at least two times in the past 10 years. Floodplain easements not only protect the landowners from floods and droughts, but also enhance fish and wildlife habitat while improving water quality. This program may also provide technical and financial assistance to implement floodplain protections without an easement. Activities in this portion of the program can help remove debris from streams, protect streambanks and establish cover on eroding lands.



Photo Courtesy of USDA-NRCS

For more information about the Emergency Watershed Protection Program, contact a NRCS representative at your local USDA Service Center.

Forest Legacy Program (FLP)

The Forest Legacy Program is administered by the Georgia Forestry Commission (GFC) and is funded by the United States Forest Service. The purpose of this program is to provide landowners the opportunity to restrict land-use changes to their forest in the future, while allowing the landowner to continue harvesting timber as long as “good practices” are used. This type of easement (a Working Forest Conservation Easement) is unique in that it allows the landowner to continue receiving economic value from the land while preventing the future conversion of the property into non-forest uses such as a subdivision or mining operation.

In this program, priorities are given to lands that can be effectively protected and managed. Georgia also focuses on locations that can provide multiple public benefits such as water quality protection, key wildlife habitat and outstanding recreation opportunities or scenic views. During the easement process, a written Forest Management Plan is developed by the Georgia Forestry Commission to address the landowner’s specific goals. Throughout the easement process, the landowner continues to own the property and uses it at their discretion.

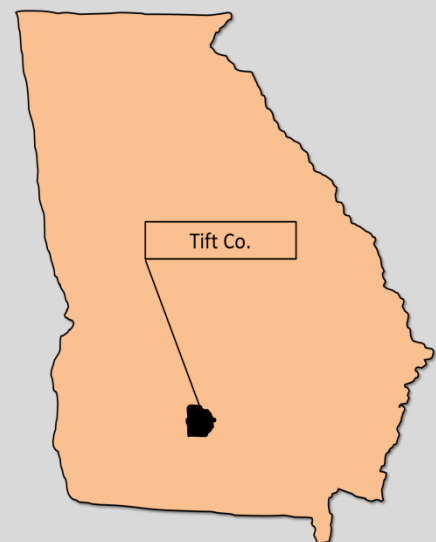
Overall, this program benefits landowners in multiple ways, including certain tax credits and the ability to continue working the land. For many program participants, the greatest benefit is the knowledge that the land will be managed properly for years to come. They recognize that having intact forestlands is a necessity to ensure that benefits such as timber products, wildlife habitat and quality soils are available for future generations.

For more information about the Forest Legacy Program, contact a Georgia Forestry Commission representative by calling your local GFC district office found in section 4, by calling 1-800-GA-TREES (428-7337), or by visiting www.gfc.state.ga.us.

Success Story – South Georgia

In 2011, Mr. Walter Stephens of Tift County donated a 422 acre perpetual conservation easement to the State of Georgia through the GFC’s Forest Legacy Program. Approximately 250 acres are composed of old-growth natural slash and longleaf pine which will be protected under restrictive management guidelines in the conservation easement. The property is home to a state protected animal, the gopher tortoise. Mr. Stephens has also planted approximately 45 acres of longleaf pine, and the property is well used for educational purposes such as field training exercises for the local agricultural college and field trips for high school students.

Story courtesy of the Georgia Forestry Commission



Healthy Forests Reserve Program (HFRP)

The Healthy Forests Reserve Program is administered by the NRCS, and is designed to assist voluntary landowners in restoring, enhancing, and protecting forestland resources on private lands through easements. The program offers three enrollment options to suit the needs of the individual landowner. A 10-year restoration cost-share agreement allows the landowner to receive up to 50 percent of the average cost of the approved conservation practices. A 30-year easement allows the landowner to receive up to 75 percent of the easement value as well as 75 percent of the average cost of the approved conservation practices. The third option is a permanent easement through which the landowner can receive up to 100 percent of the easement value of the enrolled land as well as 100 percent of the average cost of the approved conservation practices.

This important program contributes to the economy, provides biodiversity for plants and animals, and improves environmental quality by restoring and protecting important tracts of forest. In order for land to qualify for this program, the easement must improve plant and animal biodiversity, enhance carbon sequestration, and promote the recovery of a threatened or endangered species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). In exchange for entering into this easement, the landowner can avoid certain regulatory restrictions associated with the ESA on the use of that land.

For more information about the Healthy Forests Reserve Program, contact a NRCS representative at your local USDA Service Center.

Section 2: Tax Reductions, Loans, and Grant Programs

Tax Deductions and Credits for Farmers

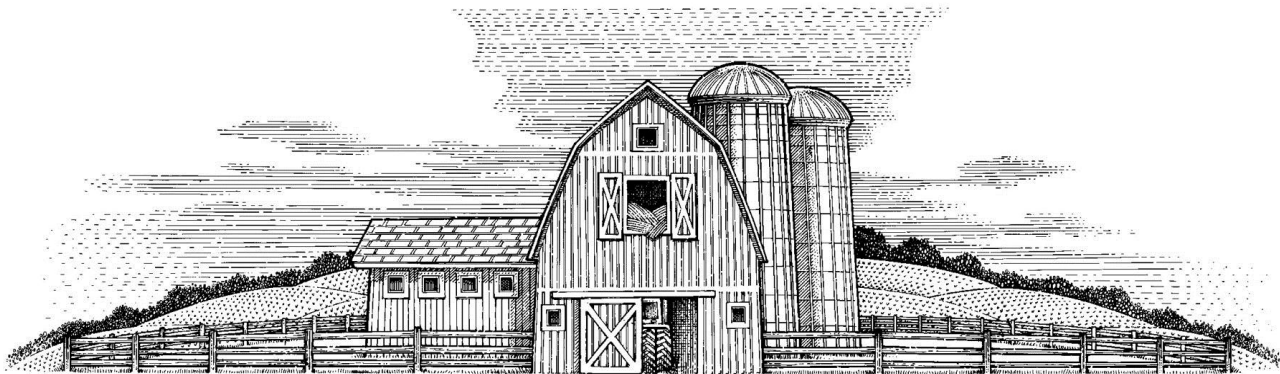
Farming operations, much like any other business, are required to pay taxes on a portion of their income as well as on property. Although most producers didn't likely go into farming because they enjoyed keeping records and filling out tax forms, ensuring the compliance of any business with the complexities that make up our tax system is of the utmost importance. Fortunately, the federal government, as well as most state governments, recognizes many of the difficulties that modern farmers face through the day-to-day operation of their business. Due to this recognition, many benefits in the tax code are designed to help farmers reduce their tax liability. This portion of Section 2 outlines the basic deductions that apply to most farmers, as well as a discussion of deductions and credits related to conservation activities (see Section 3). Although many readers may already be familiar with some of this information, the section is included because this publication attempts to emphasize issues pertaining to historically underserved producers such as minority and/or beginning farmers.

Caution: *Although the information provided here was accurate as of the publication date, the fluidity of our tax system may result in inaccurate (out-of-date) information as the tax code evolves.*

The Importance of Record Keeping

Everyone in business, including farmers, must keep accurate and appropriate records. Recordkeeping may seem like a time-consuming burden on a farmer, however, in the long-run it will actually save them time and money. This practice is vital since it helps the producer monitor the progress of the business, prepare financial statements, identify sources of receipts, keep track of deductible expenses to lessen the tax burden, prepare tax returns and support claims made on those returns.

Since in most cases the law does not require any specific kinds of recordkeeping procedures, a producer is free to select a method that works for them. At a minimum, records should include a summary of business transactions, complete with documentation such as invoices, receipts and statements from financial institutions. All sales, payroll



expenditures and purchases (especially tax deductible purchases) should be documented as they occur. Records should also be kept for travel expenses, transportation expenses (business mileage and maintenance) and entertainment and gift expenses.

Assets are an important part of your business, and records on them should also be maintained. These include any property, such as machinery and equipment, you own and use in your business. Important information on assets include when and how the asset was obtained, the purchase price, the cost of any improvements and how you used the asset. When transferring an asset out of your business, it is important to document when and how it was disposed of, the selling price of the asset and any expenses of the sale.

It is important to keep this information in an orderly fashion and in a safe place. Records pertaining to your tax returns should be kept for a minimum of three years; however, you may want to keep them much longer since most of these records will help you monitor the progress of your business. Employment records (employment taxes paid, etc.) must be kept for a minimum of four years. Asset records should also be kept for several years, even long after the asset is sold or disposed of.

For more information about record keeping for tax purposes, please reference IRS Publication 225 for the current year or contact a tax professional.

Tax Exemptions and Deductions from Farm Operations

The ordinary and necessary costs of operating a farm for profit are all federally deductible business expenses. This not only includes farm supplies such as livestock feed or fertilizer, but also wages paid for labor associated with the business. Other deductions include but are not limited to: repairs and maintenance (such as repainting or replacing shingles), interest paid on a farm mortgage, insurance premiums (such as crop insurance, health insurance for your employees, and workers compensation), and transportation or travel expenses.

One interesting tax code change that began in 2005 is called the Domestic Production Activities Deduction. Through this federal deduction, a producer is allowed to deduct six percent (as of 2010) of qualified production activities net income. For example, if a farmer produced and sold \$20,000 of tomatoes at the cost of \$5,000, then the net income would be \$15,000. Through this deduction, the producer could benefit from a six percent deduction (\$900). This is a tax break pure and simple.

For beginning farmers, a new federal deduction began in 2010 that eases the burden of business start-up and organizational costs. A producer can now elect to deduct up to \$10,000 of business start-up costs and \$5,000 of organizational costs paid or incurred after Oct. 22, 2004. If your total start-up costs exceed \$60,000, then the deduction is reduced by that amount. If your total organizational costs exceed \$50,000, then the deduction is reduced by that amount. This is a great deduction that beginning farmers (especially if they are also limited resource farmers) can take advantage of.

Concerning taxes for the State of Georgia, many purchases are exempt from the sales and use tax. These purchases include those for farm machinery and equipment among

others (livestock, feed, seed, fertilizer etc.). In order to take advantage of these exemptions, a certificate of exemption must be filed.

Property taxes for agricultural, forested, or environmentally sensitive land in Georgia may be reduced through **Conservation Use Assessment** in Georgia. Conservation Use property is assessed at 40 percent of its current use value which can benefit the property owner when compared to 40 percent fair market value. This is designed to help protect property owners from being pressured by the property tax burden to convert their lands to other uses. Through this assessment, property owners must keep the approved land use for a period of ten years or incur penalties.

The information presented in this section is only touching the surface of the complexities involved when considering or preparing taxes for a business, even if it happens to be a small farm. In general, however, larger businesses require more complex calculations to take full advantage of the available tax breaks offered to producers. Many farmers choose to have their tax returns filed for them by an accountant to ensure that they don't pay more taxes than they have to. Conveniently, the cost associated with having someone prepare your taxes is also a federally deductible expense!

For more information about federal tax deductions that apply to farming businesses, please contact a tax professional, the Georgia Department of Revenue or reference IRS Publication 225 for the current year.

Federal Tax Deductions for Conservation Activities

Producers can choose to deduct certain expenses from soil or water conservation, prevention of erosion of land used in farming, and endangered species recovery efforts. Many of these activities can be accomplished best with the help of a cost-share program offered by various organizations throughout Georgia (See Section 3). A farmer can only deduct soil and water conservation practices that are consistent with a plan approved by the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

The deduction is capped at 25 percent of the gross farming income for the same tax year. If the conservation expenses exceed that amount, they can be applied the following year but are still subject to the 25 percent limit for that tax year. Common practices that qualify for deductions include, but are not limited to, the treatment or movement of earth (leveling, terracing, grading), construction or protection of ditches and waterways, eradication of brush and the planting of windbreaks.



For more information about federal tax deductions that apply to conservation practices, please reference IRS Publication 225 for the current year.

Deductions and Credits for Easement Donations

A conservation easement is a restrictive covenant that protects land (sometimes permanently) from future development. There are many different types of easements, and they can be beneficial to both farmers and the environment (See Section 1). Various financial benefits exist to incentivize private property owners to enter portions of their land into conservation easements. For farmers in Georgia, a federal tax deduction and a state tax credit exist that can help easement donors ensure that they receive the full benefit that they deserve.

Currently, landowners who enter qualifying conservation easements can deduct up to 30 percent of their adjusted gross income (AGI) to lessen their tax burden. If the value of the donation is greater than that, it can be carried forward for five years. In 2006, Congress approved a tremendous expansion of the federal tax incentive for conservation easement donations. Through this expansion qualified farmers could deduct up to 100 percent (others could deduct 50 percent) of their AGI for the tax year. If the easement value exceeded that amount, then they could carry over the deduction for up to 16 years. This expansion was extended for several years but it expired as of 2012. The return of this expansion is possible, but has not occurred as of the printing of this document.

In Georgia, a state tax credit exists that is an additional incentive for property owners to enter portions of their property into permanent conservation easements. Through this credit, the donor can claim a tax credit worth 25 percent of the fair market value of the easement land, up to \$250,000. The credit taken cannot exceed the amount of state taxes owed that year. Any unused portion of the tax credit, however, can be carried forward for ten succeeding years. The Georgia Department of Natural Resources is responsible for ensuring that the donated property meets the state's conservation purposes and is being donated to a qualified organization.

For more information about federal tax deductions and Georgia state tax credits for easement donations, please reference section 170(h) of the Internal Revenue Code or contact Georgia Department of Revenue (respectively).

Loan Programs

Most farmers, whether experienced or just starting out, will occasionally have the need to borrow money. Loans can be a great tool to help producers become or remain successful. Some loans are designed to assist in purchasing, renting or leasing a farm. Farm expansions or equipment needs (a tractor, greenhouse, or irrigation pipes, etc.) are also common reasons that farmers will pursue a loan. This portion of Section 2 describes various loan programs designed to assist producers in accomplishing their goals, both large and small.

Farm Services Agency Loan Programs (FSA)

The FSA has a variety ways to help farmers in need of funds for specific purposes. They can back up loans made by commercial lenders to farmers (called a "guaranteed" loan), making the lender more confident to give the loan. If (and only if) a farmer does not qualify for a loan from a commercial lender, they may qualify for a "direct" loan from the FSA. This type of loan, while usually restricted to smaller amounts than a guaranteed loan,

comes directly from the federal government and in the long-term can be more easily repaid through lower interest rates.

Loans (whether direct or guaranteed) given through the FSA typically fall into one of three categories. Farm ownership loans can help a producer purchase farms or farmlands. These loans can also help purchase easements or rights of way needed in the farm's operation, erect or improve buildings, implement soil and water conservation measures and pay closing costs. Operating loans can help with the purchase of supplies and equipment. This includes livestock, poultry, farm equipment, feed, seed, fertilizer and other expenses. In addition, these loans can be used for borrower training costs, closing costs, and to reorganize and refinance debt. Emergency loans can help a farmer recover from storms or natural disasters that damage the farm business. These funds can be used to restore or replace essential property, pay for production costs associated with the disaster year, and even pay essential family living expenses. All loans must be paid back in full plus interest. The interest rates vary depending upon the type of loan received.

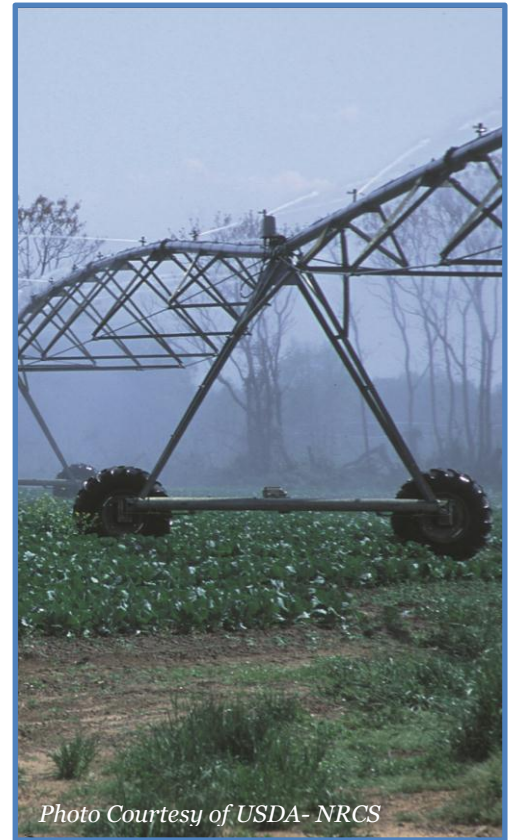


Photo Courtesy of USDA- NRCS

Every year, the FSA ensures that some of the funds set aside for direct and guaranteed loans go to beginning farmers and socially disadvantaged farmers. The FSA recognizes the difficulty faced by new farmers with limited access to finances, as well as the potential hardships socially disadvantaged farmers may face with respect to discrimination based on gender, race or ethnicity. In addition to these “set-aside” funds, the FSA has a down payment program designed to help these groups of producers purchase a farm. Through this program, the applicant makes a cash down payment of at least five percent of the purchase price, and the FSA will loan 45 percent of the farm's value at a much lower interest rate than through other programs (ex. 1.5 percent interest in 2011). The remaining funds must be obtained through a commercial lender, but the FSA can likely help arrange a deal by providing the lender a 95 percent federal guarantee. The down payment program has been a great success and has assisted nearly 3,000 new farmers purchase farms since 1994.

One additional type of FSA assistance called the Conservation Loans Program can help producers pay for their portion of the cost associated with implementing conservation practices on their land (see Section 3). These practices must be included in a conservation plan that is approved by the NRCS to qualify. Priority for recipients of this loan is given to qualified beginning or socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, owners or tenants that use the loans to convert to sustainable or organic agricultural production systems, and producers who use the loans to comply with highly erodible land “compliance” regulations.

For more information about Farm Services Agency Loan Programs, contact an FSA representative at your local USDA Service Center.

Georgia Development Authority (GDA)

The GDA was created as a public corporation and instrument of the state to assist agriculture and industries in Georgia by insuring loans to farmers and businessmen. Its main purpose is to help individuals obtain loans to assist in the development of agriculture and industry. The loans given by the GDA are long-term, and can be used to buy land, irrigation equipment and wells, build or repair farm buildings, purchase equipment and machinery, build farm ponds, establish permanent pasture, establish livestock operations, refinance debts, or construct specialized buildings for poultry, swine, dairy, and beef operations.

The GDA can not only provide loans, but can also help secure or guarantee them. Over 100 lenders, Banks, Savings and Loan associations, and Retirement Systems participate in their insured loan program. This program is unique in that it can insure up to 100 percent of the loan, making the applications very attractive to a lending institution. In the event of bankruptcy or default by the customer, the Authority repurchases the loan from the local bank and handles all phases of the collection work, including foreclosure, if necessary. Due to the confidence the lender receives, as well as the low closing costs and fast closing service for the customer, this program can be a great deal for producers in Georgia.

For more information about the Georgia Development Authority's loan program, call 800-376-FARM (3726).

Farm Credit System (FCS)

The Farm Credit System is a network of financial cooperatives, owned and operated by the same farmers and ranchers that it serves. Congress established this system in 1916 in order to provide credit to the nation's farmers and ranchers, and the unique network provides over one-third of the credit needed in rural America. Cooperatives in this network lend to agricultural producers, rural homeowners, and farm-related businesses among others. Federal oversight by the Farm Credit Administration is designed to provide for the safety and soundness of FCS institutions. For this reason, as well as the fact that they are borrower-owned, Farm Credit System Cooperatives are an attractive option for many producers.

In Georgia, there are three main cooperatives exist to help producers obtain loans through the FCS network. Southwest Georgia Farm Credit, AgSouth Farm Credit, and AgGeorgia Farm Credit all offer similar programs to suit the needs of the customer. All three institutions offer real estate and farm improvement loans, home loans, equipment loans, operating loans, irrigation loans and automobile and personal loans. These institutions may also offer leases, which can be a good option for some producers needing to get the most out of available credit.

The three Farm Credit institutions in Georgia can help applicants work with FSA in order to participate in their programs if applicable. In addition, they each pride themselves on working with beginning, small-scale and socially disadvantaged farmers. All three institutions have local branches across Georgia to make a face-to-face discussion more accessible.

For more information about Farm Credit System opportunities, find a local branch of a cooperative near you.

Farm Banks

Farm Banks, as well as other commercial banks, are widely available and can be a good source of loans for producers. Farm banks are defined by the Federal Reserve Board as banks that have an above average proportion of farm real estate and production loans in their portfolios (around 14 percent or higher). There are over 2,500 banks across America that fall into this category. They offer a variety of loans to farms both large and small, as well as agribusiness firms.

These banks are often adept at handling the guaranteed farm loan programs implemented by the Georgia Development Authority, Farm Services Agency, and other USDA programs. Farm banks may offer short-term operating loans (seed, fertilizer, etc.) lasting less than a year in duration, intermediate-term loans lasting two to five years and long-term loans (real estate, major structures and construction, etc.) lasting ten years or more.

For more information about loan opportunities through farm banks, find a local branch near you.

Grant Programs

Many organizations recognize the overall benefit to communities that is derived from successful local farm enterprises. Several grant programs exist to help producers expand their operations, implement natural resource conservation measures or to help identify resources available to enhance the producer's services. This portion of Section 2 describes the various grants made available to producers in Georgia. These grants are often targeted towards small, socially disadvantaged agricultural producers.

Value Added Producer Grants (VAPG)

The VAPG is a USDA Rural Development program designed to encourage producers to process their raw products into marketable goods, thereby making them value-added products that can increase farm income. These products not only include those conventionally processed (wheat into flour, corn into ethanol, etc.), but also include locally grown produce sold within 400 miles of your farm and organically grown produce. This grant is available to individual producers as well as groups of producers.

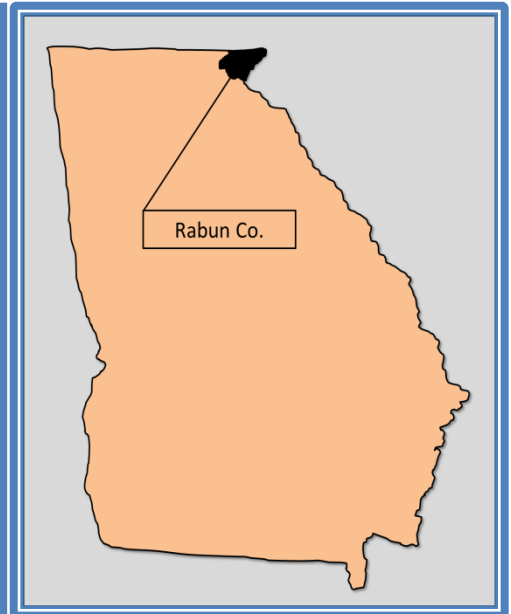
Funds for this grant can be used in two distinct areas called planning and working capital. Planning grants can help a producer determine if a proposed venture is feasible through studies and also help through development of marketing or business plans and legal evaluation. Working capital funds can be used for the normal expenses of the actual operation of a venture. Equipment purchases, however, are not allowed under this program. Grant funds can pay 50 percent of the eligible costs up to \$100,000 for planning or \$300,000 for working capital.

For more information about the Value Added Producer Grant Program, contact a Rural Development representative at your local USDA Service Center.

Success Story – Northeast Georgia

Since 1983, Robert Mitcham Sr., owner of Hillside Orchard Farms, Inc., has operated the family business growing apples muscadines, blackberries, blueberries and various vegetables on their farm in Tiger. Fruits and vegetables are processed into numerous products that are sold in their local country store and through a large mail order business. In 2010, USDA Rural Development provided a \$300,000 Value-Added Producer Grant to assist with processing and marketing the products made at Hillside Farms. The VAPG paid for jars, boxes, labels, utilities, marketing, labor, and delivery of these products to clients across the country. The completion of the grant in 2011 allowed Hillside to reach a broader base of customers and survive the downturn in the economy.

Story courtesy of the USDA-Rural Development



Small, Socially-Disadvantaged Producer Grant (SSDPG)

The SSDPG is a USDA Rural Development program designed to provide technical assistance to small, socially-disadvantaged producers through eligible cooperatives and associations of cooperatives. Applicants must be a cooperative and be able to verify their legal structure as a cooperative in the state in which they are incorporated. Individuals are not eligible for this program.

Although financial assistance is not made available through this grant, it can provide technical assistance that is extremely beneficial to the grant recipient. Assistance through this grant can help a producer improve a product or service, conduct market research or receive legal advice. In addition, many producers have used this grant to conduct feasibility studies, develop business plans, and receive necessary training. The maximum grant amount is \$200,000, and approximately \$3.5 million was made available nationwide in 2011.

For more information about the Small, Socially-Disadvantaged Producer Grant Program, contact a Rural Development representative at your local USDA Service Center.

Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)

The CIG is a USDA NRCS program designed to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies used to enhance the environment on agricultural lands. Funds are awarded through a statewide competitive grants process, and applications can be sent by eligible government or non-government organizations or individuals. In Georgia, projects can be between one and three years in duration, and grant awards can cover up to 50 percent of the cost up to \$75,000. In 2011, \$150,000 was made available for the Georgia State CIG competition.

Projects can fall under a wide range of categories in Georgia, including but not limited to energy, promotion of sustainable agriculture, productivity and environmental health of agricultural lands, nutrient management, and organic agriculture. The proposed project must encompass the development, field testing, and implementation of conservation adoption incentive systems or promising conservation technologies, practices, or procedures. For 2011, Georgia has set aside up to 10 percent of the total available CIG funds for beginning farmers or ranchers, socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers, or community-based organizations comprised of or representing these entities.

For more information about the Conservation Innovation Grants Program, contact an NRCS representative at your local USDA Service Center.

Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education-Producer Grants

Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education (SARE) is part of USDA-National Institute of Food and Agriculture Department. SARE works to spread knowledge about farm and ranch practices that are profitable, environmentally sound, and good for communities. Their Producer Grant program is a competitive opportunity for farmers to conduct research, marketing and education projects. Any producer or producer organization is eligible to apply for a Producer Grant in SARE's southern region (includes Georgia).

The activities funded through these grants include on-farm research and marketing projects that promote sustainable agriculture. The projects should be innovative, generate results useful for more than one year, and produce information that other farmers can use. Many producers use this opportunity to develop their ideas into sustainable practices or technologies. Successful grant proposals include identified project partners, outreach plans for getting out information on results and clear goals. Project maximums are \$10,000 for individual producers or \$15,000 for producer organizations.

For more information about Producer Grants, contact a SARE Southern Region staff member by calling (770)412-4787.

Organic Farming Research Foundation

This organization offers grants to conduct research on organic farming and food systems and the dissemination of research results to the agricultural community. Proposals can address agricultural production, social issues, economic issues, or any policy related topic of concern to organic farmers or ranchers. The maximum grant award is for \$15,000, but the average award is approximately \$10,000. The primary areas of interest are seed quality and crop breeding. However, other areas of interest include increasing efficiency of organic livestock systems and easing economic constraints for small-scale farms.

For more information about this research grant program, contact the Organic Farm Research Foundation at (831)426-6606.

Section 3: Natural Resource Conservation Programs

Conservation Technical Assistance Programs and Activities

Conservation Technical Assistance can best be described as the help and advice that organizations can provide to assist landowners in making sound decisions that address natural resource concerns and opportunities. This portion of Section 3 describes programs that provide that type of assistance. Many programs that provide financial assistance also provide technical assistance; however, those programs are covered under the following portion of this section (Environmental Improvement Programs).

Conservation Technical Assistance Program (CTA)

The CTA is the main program used by the NRCS to deliver sound technical assistance to land-users seeking to conserve our natural resources and food production in this country. Although it is an NRCS program, it functions through a voluntary conservation network that promotes partnerships with conservation districts, state programs as well as landowners. The assistance is available to any landowner or organization interested in addressing natural resource concerns, and the program is organized by locally-based professionals in almost every county in the United States.

The assistance provided through CTA has helped farmers, ranchers, citizen groups, and organizations in various levels of government address natural resource concerns across the country since 2002. It has helped these land users develop and apply sustainable agricultural systems, diversify agricultural operations, implement technologies, and improve wildlife habitat and water quality. Although this program does not provide financial assistance, its guidance on developing land conservation plans can open the door for other programs that offer funding such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (see EQIP). Much of the assistance in this program leads to the voluntary creation of these conservation plans that ultimately help the land-user accomplish their goals while meeting their responsibility to care for the land.

Success Story – Central Georgia

The Eastman Dodge Recreation Department sought technical assistance from the NRCS to guide them through the permitting process for constructing a new soccer field and gymnasium. Not only did the NRCS help determine their exemption from permit requirements, they also advised them on erosion and sediment control practices for the project. One Dodge Recreation Board Member, said, “NRCS saved the tax payers of Dodge County over \$30,000.00 of unnecessary cost for a recreation project that is a valuable asset and benefit to the community”.

Story courtesy of USDA-NRCS



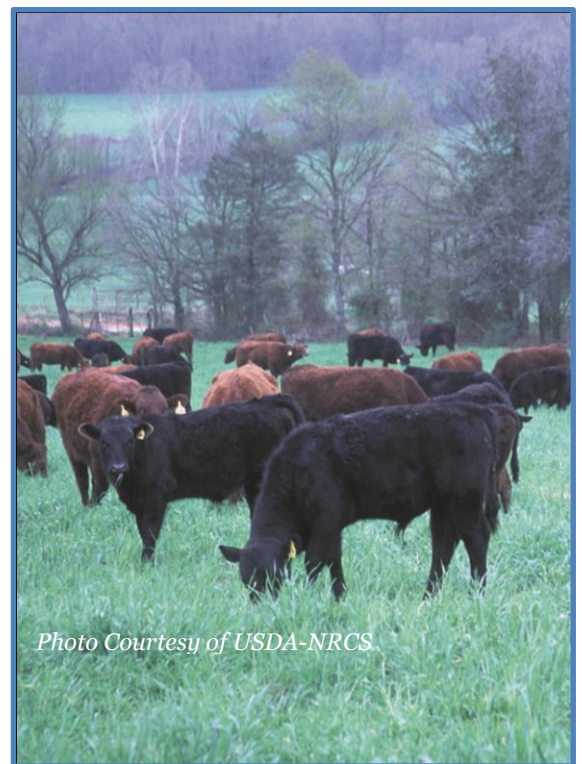
The Farm Bill of 2008 continued to address the unique concerns and circumstances of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, as well as beginning and limited resource farmers and ranchers. Part of the enhanced services outlined in this bill called for streamlined technical assistance for qualifying landowners (see “Introduction” for qualifications). Other enhancements to conservation programs and services can be found throughout this guide.

For more information about the Conservation Technical Assistance Program, contact an NRCS representative at your local USDA Service Center.

Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative (GLCI)

Grazing lands in the United States are a substantial component of the agricultural economy, and collectively are the most extensive of all agricultural land uses with over 575 million acres grazed in the United States. The GLCI is an endeavor to maintain and improve the management, productivity and health of our nation’s privately owned grazing land. Although there are primary players in this initiative, it is truly a collaborative network of multiple organizations and individuals.

The GLCI provides technical and educational assistance to keep resources healthy and productive. Specifically, it encourages better grazing management that can improve livestock production while protecting soil from wind and water erosion and reducing drought impacts. An additional benefit resulting from this initiative is the clean water and habitat that is often provided for wildlife. Much of the technical assistance in this program leads to the voluntary creation of a grazing land conservation plan to help accomplish these goals. In 2009 alone, over 27,000 of these plans were created nationwide that cover 17 million acres of grazing lands. One popular component of these plans is a “prescribed grazing” practice that was implemented on 12 million acres during the same year. The popularity of this component is attributed to the unique confluence of environmental and economic benefits for the producers as well as the public.



For more information on the Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative contact the Georgia Grazing Lands Conservation Coalition, your local conservation district or an NRCS representative at your local USDA Service Center.

Forest Stewardship Program (FSP)

In Georgia, this program is administered through the Georgia Forestry Commission and funded by the United States Forest Service. This program provides technical services to non-industrial private forest owners to encourage and enable long-term active forest management. Considering that 45 percent of all forestland in the United States is under non-industrial private ownership, the importance of proper forest management by citizens cannot be overstated. These 354 million acres of forestland contribute significantly to the state of our air and water, as well as wildlife habitat and timber supply.

A major component of this program is designed to assist in the development of multi-resource Forest Stewardship plans for the property owner to use. These plans can lay out strategies and objectives, tailored to the land and the landowner's needs, which can ensure that these healthy forests are productive for the generations to come. Forest Stewardship plans also motivate landowners to become more active in the management of their lands. Actively managed forestlands are more likely to retain the characteristics that benefit both society and wildlife.

For more information about the Forest Stewardship Program, contact a Georgia Forestry Commission representative by calling your local GFC district office found in section 4, or by calling 1-800-GA-TREES (428-7337).

Environmental Improvement Programs

The programs covered in this section offer financial assistance and incentives to manage agricultural lands in a way that promotes soil and water conservation, as well as enhancing wildlife, forests, and wetlands. Since Georgians agree on the important role that landowners play in stewardship of natural resources for future generations, many federal, state and local agencies collaborate through several voluntary programs to help landowners achieve their conservation goals.

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

The USDA Farm Service Agency administers this voluntary program, but it receives significant support from other organizations such as the NRCS. Authorized by the 1985 Farm Bill, the CRP is one of the nation's oldest conservation programs. The CRP helps provide technical and financial assistance to qualifying farmers that want to address soil and water quality concerns on their property. It is designed to help farmers make decisions about their property that are not only environmentally desirable, but also cost-effective. In addition, the program can help farming operations become or remain compliant with federal, state and local laws. Accomplishing these goals can often feel intimidating at first glance, however, the program is designed to simplify the process as much as possible while providing economic incentives.

Common practices used through the CRP are designed to address problem areas on farmland, such as eroding cropland. This can be accomplished by conversion of sensitive acreage to vegetative cover such as planting grasses, trees or establishing vegetative buffers

along waterways. These types of practices not only help continue the production of food through conserving our soil resources, but also help enhance forest and wetland resources while providing clean water to our local streams. The CRP reduces the price of these conversions through cost-sharing (up to 50 percent), and farmers receive an annual rental payment during the period of a multi-year contract (10 to 15 years).

As of 2009, there were over 33 million acres enrolled in this popular nationwide program. In order to qualify, you must have owned or operated the land for at least one year and your land must have a weighted average erosion index of eight or higher and been planted to an agricultural commodity four of the six previous years. A year-round continuous sign-up is available for environmentally sensitive land devoted to specific conservation practices. All other eligible land can only enroll during designated sign-up periods.

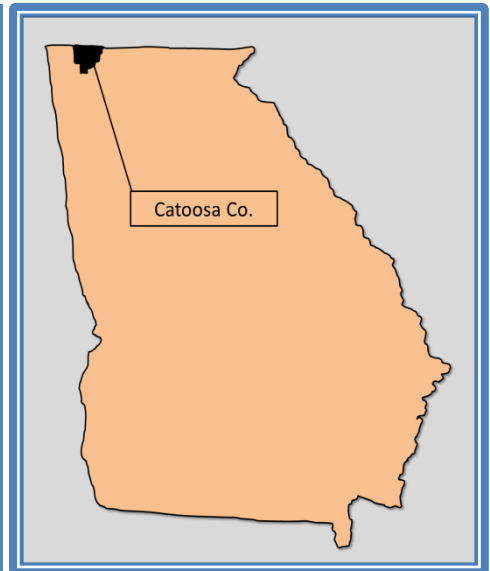
The Farm Bill of 2008 authorized funds to create a Transition Incentives Program under the CRP. This program allows a retired or retiring owner or operator that has expiring CRP land to receive two years of additional rental payments if they sell or lease the enrolled land to a beginning or socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher.

For more information about the Conservation Reserve Program, contact a Farm Service Agency representative at your local USDA Service Center.

Success Story – Northwest Georgia

James Ramey of Catoosa County has been in the poultry-farming business for most of his 60+ years. A few years ago, the Rameys acquired an abandoned dairy farm adjacent to theirs. This added about 400 acres to their business; however there was no fencing on the new property. Thanks to the Conservation Reserve Program administered by the FSA with technical assistance through the NRCS, they obtained cost-share help. The CRP assisted with installation of livestock exclusion fencing. The Rameys are very enthusiastic about all the help they have received. They report that the NRCS has been a great asset in “total farm planning”.

Story courtesy of USDA-NRCS



Organic Certification Cost-Share Program

This program is administered through the Georgia Department of Agriculture under the National Organic Cost Share Program. Organic farming can reduce the amount of pollutants making it to our water and air when compared to traditional farming. Without the use of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, the environmental impact on the land is lessened greatly. In addition, the concept of organic products being healthier for consumers has resulted in organic food sales being the fastest growing sector in the food industry. Organic food sales in the United States tripled from \$393 million in 2001 to \$1.7 billion in 2007.

Organic production comes with some more stringent requirements that are not associated with traditional farming. Organic producers, handlers, and processors must be certified by a USDA accredited certifying agent to ensure that all the proper procedures are followed on the farm. The cost for this certification is a common concern among producers interested in converting to organic production. Luckily, this program can lessen the burden through cost-sharing up to 75 percent.

For more information about the Organic Certification Cost-Share Program, contact a Georgia Department of Agriculture representative by calling (404)651-9486.

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)

WHIP is a voluntary NRCS program for landowners who desire to improve habitat on their property for fish and wildlife. Authorized by the 1996 Farm Bill, it provides technical and financial assistance to landowners that are interested in enrolling acreage (Recommended in Georgia: greater than 10 acres for five years) to implement habitat enhancement projects on. The NRCS works with the landowner to develop conservation plans (see CTA) that outline the goals and specific practices needed to improve the habitat, as well as cost-share on the approved practices at 75 percent. WHIP funds can be applied for any time of year, however, selection of funding recipients may occur only once per year.

The national priorities for WHIP are to protect and enhance habitats for at-risk, threatened and endangered species of fish and wildlife while reducing the impacts of invasive species. As of 2011 in Georgia (and other states), two special initiatives have been implemented by a group of organizations to address the imperiled status of the Northern Bobwhite Quail and the Red Cockaded Woodpecker. The Northern Bobwhite Conservation Initiative focuses on improving habitat across the species range that existed in the baseline year of 1980. The decline of the Bobwhite has been attributed to the destruction of habitat necessary for their reproduction and survival in the wild. The Longleaf Pine Conservation Initiative is designed to restore the diverse forests that once existed within its historical range. These longleaf forests support endangered species such as the Red-Cockaded Woodpecker, but only currently cover five percent of its previous range. WHIP funds are available for landowners willing to participate in these initiatives; however, specific innovative practices are required to address the unique issues concerning these species.



Photo Courtesy of USDA-NRCS

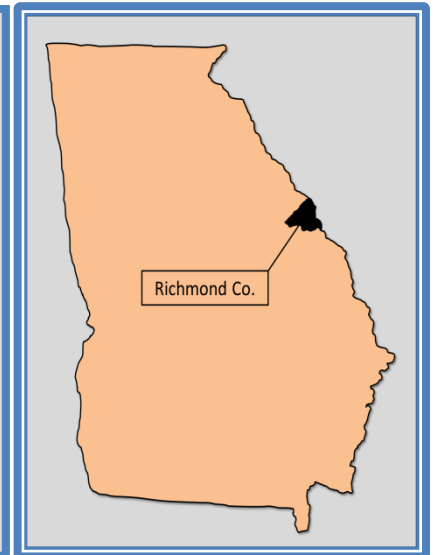
In the 2008 Farm Bill, this program was authorized to enhance services to socially disadvantaged farmers, as well as beginning and limited resource farmers. For qualifying landowners, higher cost-share rates and streamlined services may be available. In addition, a portion of funds may be provided up-front to assist the landowner in purchasing materials or contracting.

For more information about the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, contact a NRCS representative at your local USDA Service Center.

Success Story – East Georgia

Thomas Mims discovered a passion for wildlife preservation in 1972 after buying back land that had once been owned by his grandmother. With funding from the WHIP, Mims has been able to accelerate his conservation work. He has set aside 151 acres of old pasture land to convert to wildlife habitat. Along with this effort, in 2010 and 2011 he planted over 600 long leaf pine seedlings across this tract of land. Long leaf pine is native to Georgia, and can withstand fire, an important consideration in this climate. The Forestry Stewardship Council awarded Mims the distinction as Richmond County's first forest steward. Mims says "I think everybody has a duty to leave land better than when they got it. We're all just borrowing it really...".

Story courtesy of USDA-NRCS



Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

This program was authorized in the 2002 Farm Bill (previously known as the Conservation Security Program), and is administered by the NRCS. The CSP is a voluntary program which is designed to assist qualifying landowners interested in promoting the conservation and improvement of soil, water, air, energy, plant and animal life. This program offers both technical and financial assistance, and provides for many producers regardless of size of operation, crops produced, or geographic location.

Specifically, this program helps producers maintain existing conservation practices and encourages them to implement new practices that will provide additional levels of conservation benefits. The CSP pays for conservation performance—the higher the performance, the higher the payment. An annual payment is available for the installation of new practices and maintenance of existing practices. An additional payment is available for producers that implement a resource-conserving crop rotation. Reduced soil erosion and water pollution are two potential environmental benefits of crop rotation.

Although nationally, the CSP addresses seven resource concerns, each state focuses the program on three to five that are most relevant within its borders. Georgia has four priority natural resource concerns that can be addressed through the CSP. These priorities are water quantity, water quality, soil quality, and soil erosion. Applications are accepted during a sign-up period only and must adequately address at least one of Georgia's priority resource concerns.

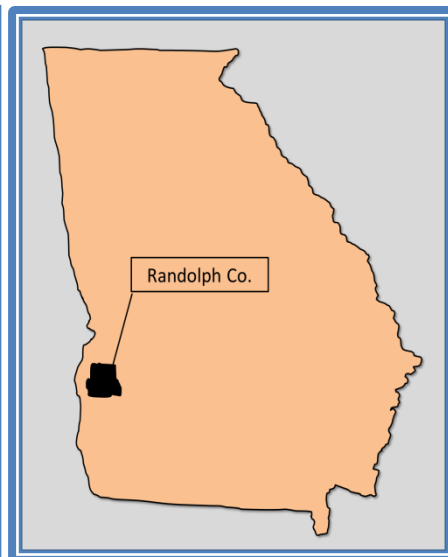
The Farm Bill of 2008 authorized a “set-aside” program that requires five percent of the funds in the CSP to be reserved for socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers. This totals about 58 million dollars a year, however, these funds are re-pooled if not used. The CSP also guarantees a minimum payment of \$1,000 to socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers in any fiscal year that a contract’s payment amount total is less than \$1,000.

For more information about the Conservation Stewardship Program, contact a NRCS representative at your local USDA Service Center.

Success Story – Southwest Georgia

Janice Giles renewed her commitment to the family farm when her father died, and has taken steps to continue his legacy of conservation. Their farm is now enrolled in the CSP for both agricultural land and private forest land. This program is helping Giles by extending the grazing season and reducing the need for feeding hay, as well as helping her utilize forest stand improvement, firebreaks, and prescribed burning to improve upland wildlife habitat management. She earned the Conservationist of the Year for 2010 award from the local Soil and Water Conservation District. “I heard my father say that no more land could be made and we need to take care of what we have... I now understand what he was talking about” Giles said.

Story courtesy of USDA-NRCS



Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

Authorized by the 1996 Farm Bill, this voluntary NRCS program assists producers to implement structural and management practices designed to improve soil, water, plant, animal, air and related resources on agricultural land. EQIP is open to any producer engaged in livestock, forestry, or crop production on eligible land, but requires the development of a conservation plan for the property. Financial assistance for plan development may be available through EQIP, and cost-share on practices outlined in the plan is provided. Examples of such practices include animal waste storage facilities, grassed waterways, grade stabilization structures, livestock watering facilities and streambank stabilization.

In Georgia, the NRCS offers EQIP cost-sharing on a county-by-county basis. The rates range from 50 percent to 75 percent, depending on the property location within Georgia’s borders. The Farm Bill of 2008 helped address circumstances and concerns of historically underserved farmers. Due to this authorization, socially disadvantaged, limited resource, beginning, and small-scale farmers in Georgia may receive additional benefits under EQIP. These benefits include streamlined technical and financial assistance, up to 90 percent cost-share, and the possibility of receiving partial funds in advance of practice implementation to help purchase materials or for contracting purposes. In addition, a

mandate was included that requires five percent of EQIP funds to be set aside (\$366 million if fully utilized) for these underserved farmers.

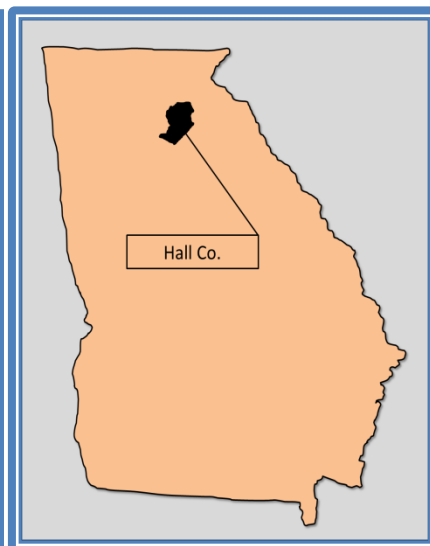
The 2008 Farm Bill provides organic producers and producers who are actively transitioning to organic production, the opportunity to compete for EQIP funds. This is a new provision to the Farm Bill, and it has several requirements. In Georgia, the organic producer must develop and carryout an Organic System Plan (OSP) and assistance is only given to conservation practices for organic production. Payments may not exceed \$20,000 per year or \$80,000 during any six year period. In addition, contracts will be reviewed annually and any contract will be cancelled for any producer not actively pursuing organic certification (see Organic Cost-Share Certification Program in this section) or for being out of compliance with the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990.

For more information about the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, contact a NRCS representative at your local USDA Service Center.

Success Story – Northeast Georgia

The Conner family take pride in their farm that they began operating in 2004. Through the EQIP program, NRCS has helped them address several conservation concerns on their property, and has made their farm a showcase for the local soil and water conservation district. They received cost-share funds to construct an incinerator for dead birds from their poultry operation, set up a rotational cattle grazing system with fencing and alternative watering sources, and a stream restoration project. The Conners were subsequently awarded the honor of being named “Farm Family of the Year” in 2010 for the Hall County Soil and Water Conservation District.

Story courtesy of USDA-NRCS



Section 319 Program (319)

This federally funded program is a water quality improvement program authorized by section 319 of the Clean Water Act. The purpose of this program is to cost-share on projects that improve the water quality in watersheds that experience significant water pollution issues. Although this is administered by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division, it is not a statewide program. These funds are distributed to organizations in specific areas that have water resource concerns, and all projects must address those concerns.

Several areas within the state have these funds available, and most are approved for use on agricultural lands. Common projects include, but are not limited to: fencing, water troughs, stream crossings, stream buffers, filter strips, stack houses, composters, incinerators and heavy use areas. If available, these projects would be managed by a local organization with the technical assistance of the NRCS. Although the specific

administrator of these funds will vary across the state, typically your local soil and water conservation district will be aware if a program exists in your area.

For more information about the Section 319 Program, contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District, or your regional office for the Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission found in Section 4.

Success Story – Southwest Georgia

Max (Buddy) Lewis is the owner of Lewis poultry farm in Dougherty County. Lewis operates a 250-acre farm of corn, cotton, hayland, and pastureland. Lewis received funding through the Golden Triangle Resource Conservation & Development Council's "319" project to install a stackhouse facility for dry litter. The NRCS provided technical assistance with engineering design and writing a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan for the farm. Before assistance was available for Lewis, litter was stacked on the ground around his four chicken houses. This dry litter stackhouse now protects the water quality of the surrounding wetlands on his property.

Story courtesy of USDA-NRCS



Southern Pine Beetle Initiative (SPB)

This program is administered by the Georgia Forestry Commission, and is funded through the United States Forest Service. The program is intended to cost-share on silvicultural practices designed to minimize or eliminate the threats posed by the Southern Pine Beetle. Emphasis is placed on both addressing current and future beetle infestations. The primary practices used in this prevention program are those designed to increase the health of pine stands by controlling density and pine competition. The four major practices included in this program are non-commercial thinning, release, prescribed burning, and Southern Pine Beetle suppression.

Georgia Forestry Commission staff will accept applications, evaluate the site, and make recommendations of the steps necessary to address the issues (formation of a brief management plan). The forester also inspects the property post-implementation to ensure successful completion of practices. Although a landowner need not have a Forest Stewardship Plan, priority is given to those that do (see Forest Stewardship Program in this section). Limited resource landowners, Forest Stewardship Properties, Certified Steward properties and properties falling within higher Southern Pine Beetle hazard counties also receive priority points.

For more information about the Southern Pine Beetle Initiative, contact a Georgia Forestry Commission representative by calling 1-800-GA-TREES (428-7337), or by calling your district office listed in Section 4.

Section 4: Agency and Organization Contact Information

To best identify the contact information for the local office of the organization of interest, please begin by finding your county in the list below. Look to the right of your county, and you will find the name of your local USDA Service Center, the name of your Georgia Forestry Commission District, as well as the number of your Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission Region. This information can be used in the subsequent pages to find the contact information you are looking for. Contact information for other organizations not listed on this table can be found on the last page of this section.

County	USDA Service Center NRCS/FSA/RD	GFC District	GSWCC Region
Appling	Baxley	Satilla	6
Atkinson	Pearson	Satilla	6
Bacon	Alma	Satilla	6
Baker	Newton	Flint	5
Baldwin	Greensboro/Eatonton/Sandersville	Oconee	4
Banks	Commerce	Coosa	2
Barrow	Watkinsville/Monroe	Coosa	2
Bartow	Calhoun/Cartersville	Coosa	1
Ben Hill	Tifton/Benhill and Irwin	Flint	5
Berrien	Nashville	Satilla	5
Bibb	Fort Valley	Oconee	5
Bleckley	Cochran	Ogeechee	4
Brantley	Blackshear	Satilla	6
Brooks	Quitman	Flint	5
Bryan	Richmond Hill/Springfield	Ogeechee	6
Bulloch	Statesboro	Ogeechee	6
Burke	Waynesboro	Oconee	6
Butts	McDonough	Chattahoochee	4
Calhoun	Morgan	Flint	5
Camden	Jesup/Brunswick	Satilla	6
Candler	Metter	Ogeechee	6
Carroll	Carrollton	Chattahoochee	1
Catoosa	LaFayette	Coosa	1
Charlton	Waycross/Blackshear	Satilla	6
Chatham	Sylvania/Springfield	Ogeechee	6
Chattahoochee	Buena Vista	Flint	5
Chattooga	LaFayette/Rome	Coosa	1
Cherokee	Calhoun/Cartersville	Coosa	1
Clarke	Watkinsville/Monroe	Coosa	2

County	USDA Service Center NRCS/FSA/RD	GFC District	GSWCC Region
Clay	Cuthbert	Flint	5
Clayton	McDonough	Chattahoochee	3
Clinch	Valdosta/Nashville	Satilla	5
Cobb	Marietta	Coosa	3
Coffee	Douglas	Satilla	6
Colquitt	Moultrie	Flint	5
Columbia	Thomson/Augusta	Oconee	2
Cook	Nashville/Adel	Flint	5
Coweta	Newnan	Chattahoochee	1
Crawford	Fort Valley	Flint	5
Crisp	Cordele	Flint	5
Dade	LaFayette	Coosa	1
Dawson	Gainesville	Coosa	2
De Kalb	Bainbridge	Chattahoochee	3
Decatur	Lawrenceville/Monroe	Flint	5
Dodge	Eastman	Ogeechee	4
Dooly	Vienna	Flint	5
Dougherty	Albany/Morgan	Flint	5
Douglas	Carrollton	Chattahoochee	1
Early	Blakely	Flint	5
Echols	Valdosta/Nashville	Satilla	5
Effingham	Springfield	Ogeechee	6
Elbert	Elberton	Coosa	2
Emanuel	Swainsboro	Ogeechee	6
Evans	Reidsville/Statesboro	Ogeechee	6
Fannin	Blairsville	Coosa	1
Fayette	McDonough	Chattahoochee	4
Floyd	Rome	Coosa	1
Forsyth	Gainesville	Coosa	2
Franklin	Hartwell	Coosa	2
Fulton	Carrollton/Marietta	Chattahoochee	3
Gilmer	Blairsville	Coosa	1
Glascok	Louisville/Thomson	Oconee	6
Glynn	Brunswick/Jesup	Satilla	6
Gordon	Calhoun/Cartersville	Coosa	1
Grady	Cairo	Flint	5
Greene	Greensboro/Madison	Oconee	4
Gwinnett	Lawrenceville/Monroe	Coosa	3
Habersham	Clarkesville	Coosa	2

County	USDA Service Center NRCS/FSA/RD	GFC District	GSWCC Region
Hall	Gainesville	Coosa	2
Hancock	Sandersville/Greensboro	Oconee	4
Haralson	Carrollton	Chattahoochee	1
Harris	Buena Vista	Chattahoochee	5
Hart	Hartwell	Coosa	2
Heard	Carrollton	Chattahoochee	1
Henry	McDonough	Chattahoochee	3
Houston	Perry/Fort Valley	Flint	5
Irwin	Ben Hill and Irwin	Flint	5
Jackson	Commerce	Coosa	2
Jasper	Madison	Oconee	4
Jeff Davis	Hazlehurst	Satilla	6
Jefferson	Louisville	Oconee	6
Jenkins	Millen	Ogeechee	6
Johnson	Wrightsville/Sandersville	Oconee	4
Jones	Eatonton/Madison	Oconee	4
Lamar	Barnesville	Chattahoochee	4
Lanier	Lakeland/Valdosta	Satilla	5
Laurens	Dublin	Ogeechee	4
Lee	Leesburg	Flint	5
Liberty	Jesup/Richmond Hill	Ogeechee	6
Lincoln	Washington	Oconee	2
Long	Jesup/Richmond Hill	Ogeechee	6
Lowndes	Valdosta	Satilla	5
Lumpkin	Gainesville	Coosa	2
Macon	Oglethorpe	Flint	5
Madison	Commerce	Coosa	2
Marion	Buena Vista	Flint	5
McDuffie	Thomson	Oconee	2
McIntosh	Jesup/Richmond Hill	Ogeechee	6
Meriwether	Carrollton/Newnan	Chattahoochee	1
Miller	Colquitt	Flint	5
Mitchell	Camilla	Flint	5
Monroe	Barnesville	Chattahoochee	4
Montgomery	Mount Vernon	Ogeechee	6
Morgan	Madison	Coosa	4
Murray	LaFayette/Calhoun	Coosa	1
Muscogee	Buena Vista	Chattahoochee	5
Newton	Madison	Chattahoochee	4

County	USDA Service Center NRCS/FSA/RD	GFC District	GSWCC Region
Oconee	Watkinsville/Monroe	Coosa	2
Oglethorpe	Washington/Elberton	Oconee	2
Paulding	Carrollton	Coosa	1
Peach	Fort Valley	Flint	5
Pickens	Cartersville/Calhoun	Coosa	1
Pierce	Blackshear	Satilla	6
Pike	Barnesville	Chattahoochee	4
Polk	Rome	Coosa	1
Pulaski	Hawkinsville/Cochran	Ogeechee	5
Putnam	Eatonton	Oconee	4
Quitman	Cuthbert	Flint	5
Rabun	Blairsville/Gainesville	Coosa	1
Randolph	Cuthbert	Flint	5
Richmond	Augusta/Thomson	Oconee	6
Rockdale	Lawrenceville/Monroe	Chattahoochee	3
Schley	Americus	Flint	5
Screven	Sylvania	Ogeechee	6
Seminole	Donalsonville	Flint	5
Spalding	McDonough	Chattahoochee	4
Stephens	Eastanollee	Coosa	2
Stewart	Preston/Americus	Flint	5
Sumter	Americus	Flint	5
Talbot	Buena Vista	Chattahoochee	5
Taliaferro	Washington/Greensboro	Oconee	4
Tattnall	Reidsville	Ogeechee	6
Taylor	Fort Valley	Flint	5
Telfair	McRae	Ogeechee	6
Terrell	Dawson	Flint	5
Thomas	Thomasville	Flint	5
Tift	Tifton	Flint	5
Toombs	Lyons	Ogeechee	6
Towns	Blairsville	Coosa	1
Treutlen	Mt. Vernon	Ogeechee	6
Troup	Lagrange/Carrollton	Chattahoochee	1
Turner	Ashburn	Flint	5
Twiggs	Cochran/Eastman	Oconee	4
Union	Blairsville	Coosa	1
Upson	Barnesville	Chattahoochee	4
Walker	LaFayette	Coosa	1

County	USDA Service Center NRCS/FSA/RD	GFC District	GSWCC Region
Walton	Monroe	Coosa	4
Ware	Waycross/Pearson	Satilla	6
Warren	Thomson/Louisville	Oconee	4
Washington	Sandersville	Oconee	4
Wayne	Jesup	Satilla	6
Webster	Preston	Flint	5
Wheeler	McRae/Alamo	Ogeechee	6
White	Gainesville/Eastonollee	Coosa	2
Whitfield	Dalton	Coosa	1
Wilcox	Rochelle	Ogeechee	5
Wilkes	Washington	Oconee	2
Wilkinson	Dublin	Oconee	4
Worth	Sylvester	Flint	5

USDA Service Centers

NRCS, FSA, and RD Offices*

ADEL FIELD SERVICE CENTER	BAXLEY SERVICE CENTER	CARROLLTON SERVICE CENTER
204 EAST NINTH ST ADEL, GA 31620-3596 (229) 896-3206	656 S MAIN ST STE D BAXLEY, GA 31513-0127 (912) 367-3603	408 N WHITE ST CARROLLTON, GA 30117-2441 (770) 832-8942
ALAMO SERVICE CENTER	BEN HILL AND IRWIN SERVICE CENTER	CLARKESVILLE SERVICE CENTER
16 W FOREST AVE ALAMO, GA 30411 (912) 568-7411	163 Tech Point Drive Ocilla, GA 31774 (229) 468-7491	555 MONROE ST CLARKESVILLE, GA 30523-7815 (706) 754-6239
ALBANY FIELD SERVICE CENTER	BLACKSHEAR SERVICE CENTER	COCHRAN SERVICE CENTER
125 PINE AVE STE 150 ALBANY, GA 31701-2593 (229) 430-8509	709 HENDRY ST BLACKSHEAR, GA 31516-1019 (912) 449-6273 ext 112	142 E. PEACOCK ST COCHRAN, GA 31014-1558 (478) 934-6571
ALMA SERVICE CENTER	BLAIRSVILLE SERVICE CENTER	COLQUITT SERVICE CENTER
203 S DIXON ST ALMA, GA 31510-2703 (912) 632-4611	165 WELLBORN ST BLAIRSVILLE, GA 30512-3549 (706) 745-2794	150C WEST ST COLQUITT, GA 39837-3417 (229) 758-5219
AMERICUS SERVICE CENTER	BLAKELY SERVICE CENTER	COMMERCE SERVICE CENTER
127 WILLIAM BOWEN POINTE AMERICUS, GA 31719-9237 (229) 924-4056	1059 ARLINGTON AVE BLAKELY, GA 39823-1606 (229) 723-3193	1458 ILA RD COMMERCE, GA 30530-4466 (706) 335-7145
ASHBURN SERVICE CENTER	BRUNSWICK SERVICE CENTER	CORDELE SERVICE CENTER
414 COUNTY FARM RD ASHBURN, GA 31714-3414 (229) 567-3994	3661 ALTAMA AVE BRUNSWICK, GA 31520-3631 (912) 265-8092	110 W 13TH AVE CORDELE, GA 31015-4265 (229) 273-4148
ATHENS STATE OFFICE	BUENA VISTA SERVICE CENTER	CUTHBERT SERVICE CENTER
355 East Hancock Avenue Athens, GA 30601-2775 (706) 546-2169	111 BAKER ST STE D BUENA VISTA, GA 31803-9362 (229) 649-4495 ext 2	88 E DAWSON ST CUTHBERT, GA 39840 (229) 732-3001
AUGUSTA SERVICE CENTER	CAIRO SERVICE CENTER	CUTHBERT SERVICE CENTER
501 GREENE ST, SUITE 309 AUGUSTA, GA 30901-4404 (706) 724-2247	65 11TH AVENE CAIRO, GA 39828-1693 (229) 377-1607	88 E DAWSON ST CUTHBERT, GA 39840 (229) 732-3001
BAINBRIDGE SERVICE CENTER	CALHOUN SERVICE CENTER	DALTON SERVICE CENTER
1213 VADA RD BAINBRIDGE, GA 39817-8332 (229) 246-5773	717 S WALL ST STE 1 CALHOUN, GA 30701-2649 (706) 629-2582	1407 APPLEWOOD DR DALTON, GA 30720-2522 (706) 278-7906
BARNESVILLE SERVICE CENTER	CAMILLA SERVICE CENTER	DAWSON SERVICE CENTER
231 HIGHWAY 41 N BARNESVILLE, GA 30204-3235 (770) 358-0787	30 W BROAD ST CAMILLA, GA 31730-1764 (229) 336-1451	955 FORRESTER DR DAWSON, GA 39842-2100 (229) 995-5811

DONALSONVILLE SERVICE CENTER	HARTWELL SERVICE CENTER	MADISON SERVICE CENTER
207 E Crawford St. DONALSONVILLE, GA 39845-1319 (229) 524-2434	88 MARET ST HARTWELL, GA 30643-1172 (706) 376-5451	205 E JEFFERSON ST MADISON, GA 30650-1701 (706) 342-1315
DOUGLAS SERVICE CENTER	HAWKINSVILLE SERVICE CENTER	MARIETTA SERVICE CENTER
703 WARD ST E DOUGLAS, GA 31533-0311 (912) 384-4811	105 N LUMPKIN ST HAWKINSVILLE, GA 31036-1768 (478) 783-1391	678 S COBB DR SE STE 150 MARIETTA, GA 30060-3105 (770) 792-0594
DUBLIN SERVICE CENTER	HAZLEHURST SERVICE CENTER	MCDONOUGH SERVICE CENTER
100 N FRANKLIN ST DUBLIN, GA 31021-6799 (478) 275-0425	9 E FRANKLIN ST HAZLEHURST, GA 31539 (912) 375-2015	333 PHILLIPS DR MCDONOUGH, GA 30253-3444 (770) 957-5705
EASTANOLLEE SERVICE CENTER	JESUP SERVICE CENTER	MCRAE SERVICE CENTER
1630 CLARY CONNECTOR EASTANOLLEE, GA 30577 (706) 779-2134	1900 SUNSET BLVD JESUP, GA 31545-7812 (912) 427-2502	91 TELFAIR AVE MCRAE, GA 31055-2163 (229) 868-5696
EASTMAN SERVICE CENTER	LAFAYETTE SERVICE CENTER	METTER FIELD SERVICE CENTER
230 FOSTER ST STE C EASTMAN, GA 31023-6255 (478) 374-2531	208 N DUKE ST LA FAYETTE, GA 30728-2591 (706) 638-1558 ext 3	1075 E HIAWATHA ST METTER, GA 30439-4917 (912) 685-5255
EATONTON SERVICE CENTER	LAKELAND SERVICE CENTER	MILLEN SERVICE CENTER
130 SPARTA HWY EATONTON, GA 31024-8484 (706) 485-2341	1014 West Thigpen LAKELAND, GA 30046 (229) 482-3440	837 COLLEGE AVE MILLEN, GA 30442-1678 (478) 982-4281
ELBERTON SERVICE CENTER	LAWRENCEVILLE SERVICE CENTER	MONROE SERVICE CENTER
333 HEARD ST ELBERTON, GA 30635-2436 (706) 283-3021	750 S PERRY ST STE 410 LAWRENCEVILLE, GA 30046 (770) 963-9288	111 E SPRING ST MONROE, GA 30655 (770) 267-1359
FORT VALLEY SERVICE CENTER	LYONS SERVICE CENTER	MORGAN SERVICE CENTER
1030 PEACH PKWY, STE 4 FORT VALLEY, GA 31030 (478) 827-0016	200 COURTHOUSE SQ LYONS, GA 30436-1010 (912) 526-6154	10893 DICKEY ST MORGAN, GA 30866-0066 (229) 849-2415
GAINESVILLE SERVICE CENTER	LEESBURG SERVICE CENTER	MOULTRIE SERVICE CENTER
734 E CRESCENT DR GAINESVILLE, GA 30501-5082 (770) 536-0549	101 MAIN ST LEESBURG, GA 31763-3792 (229) 759-9267	350 VETERANS PKWY N BLDG 3 MOULTRIE, GA 31788-4178 (229) 985-5399
GREENSBORO SERVICE CENTER	LOUISVILLE SERVICE CENTER	MT VERNON SERVICE CENTER
1600 S Main Street Greensboro, GA 30642-1266 (706) 453-7021	406 GREEN ST LOUISVILLE, GA 30434-1714 (478) 625-7771	301 S RICHARDSON ST MT VERNON, GA 30445 (912) 583-4432

NEWTON SERVICE CENTER	ROCHELLE SERVICE CENTER	THOMSON SERVICE CENTER
398 GA HIGHWAY 37 SW NEWTON, GA 39870 (229) 734-5272	671 2ND AVE ROCHELLE, GA 31079 (229) 365-2231	226 BOB KIRK RD NW THOMSON, GA 30824-6744 (706) 595-1339
NASHVILLE SERVICE CENTER	ROME SERVICE CENTER	TIFTON SERVICE CENTER
516A COUNTY FARM RD STE 2 NASHVILLE, GA 31639 (229) 686-2363	1401 DEAN AVE SE STE I ROME, GA 30161-6494 (706) 291-5654	2406 TIFT AVEN TIFTON, GA 31794 (229) 382-0273
OGLETHORPE SERVICE CENTER	SANDERSVILLE SERVICE CENTER	VALDOSTA SERVICE CENTER
122 CHATHAM ST OGLETHORPE, GA 31068 (912) 754-6664	1222 S. HARRIS ST. SANDERSVILLE, GA 31082-6912 (478) 552-6073	2108 E HILL AVE VALDOSTA, GA 31601-0600 (229) 242-0841
PEARSON SERVICE CENTER	SPRINGFIELD FIELD SERVICE CENTER	VIENNA FIELD SERVICE CENTER
686 AUSTIN AVE. E PEARSON, GA 31642 (912) 754-6664	203 S LAUREL STREET SPRINGFIELD, GA 31329 (912) 754-6664	1150 INDUSTRIAL DRIVE, SUITE 201 VIENNA, GA 31092 (229) 268-9106
PERRY SERVICE CENTER	STATESBORO SERVICE CENTER	WASHINGTON SERVICE CENTER
801 MAIN ST 2ND FL PERRY, GA 31069-3331 (478) 987-2271	151 LANGSTON CHAPEL RD STATESBORO, GA 30458-3751 (912) 871-2605	52A LEXINGTON AVE WASHINGTON, GA 30673-1422 (706) 678-2630
PRESTON SERVICE CENTER	SWAINSBORO SERVICE CENTER	WATKINSVILLE SERVICE CENTER
177 MONTGOMERY STREET PRESTON, GA 31824 (229) 828-2015	145 N ANDERSON DR SWAINSBORO, GA 30401-4439 (706) 769-3990	1291 GREENSBORO HWY WATKINSVILLE, GA 30677-2718 (706) 769-3990
QUITMAN SERVICE CENTER	SYLVANIA SERVICE CENTER	WAYCROSS SERVICE CENTER
400 E COURTLAND AVE QUITMAN, GA 31643 (229) 263-4116	216 MIMS RD SYLVANIA, GA 30467-1997 (912) 564-2207	601 TEBEAU ST RM 210 WAYCROSS, GA 31501-4701 (912) 285-5975
REIDSVILLE SERVICE CENTER	SYLVESTER SERVICE CENTER	WAYNESBORO SERVICE CENTER
206 S MAIN ST REIDSVILLE, GA 30453 (912) 557-6706	410 N LIVINGSTON ST SYLVESTER, GA 31791-1626 (229) 776-6985	715 W 6TH ST WAYNESBORO, GA 30830-4407 (706) 554-2109
RICHMOND HILL SERVICE CENTER	THOMASVILLE SERVICE CENTER	WRIGHTSVILLE SERVICE CENTER
185 RICHARD R DAVIS DR RICHMOND HILL, GA 31324 (912) 459-2350	2551 E PINETREE BLVD THOMASVILLE, GA 31792 (229) 226-3462	6818 E COLLEGE ST WRIGHTSVILLE, GA 31096 (478) 864-2810

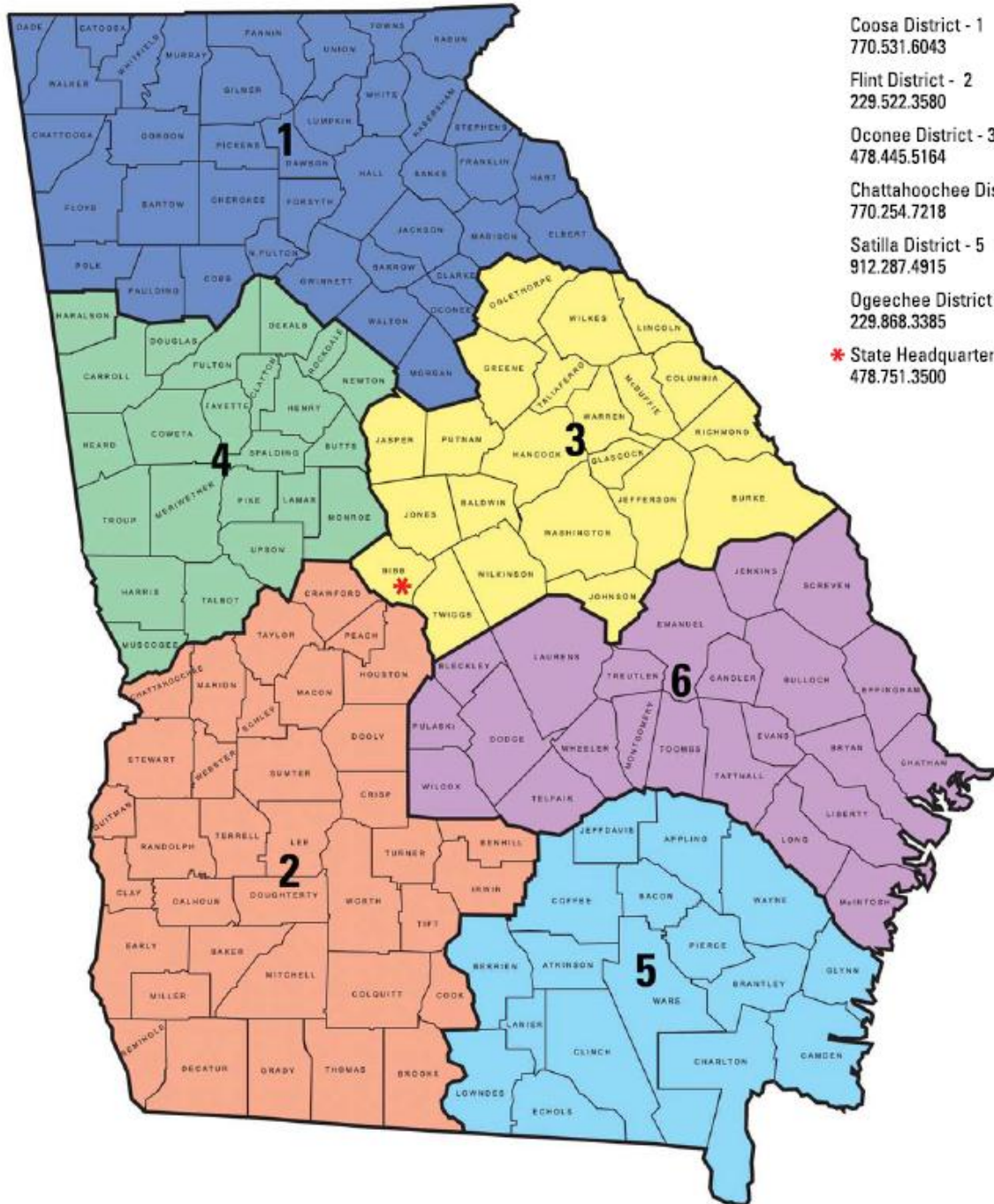
****For the most up-to-date list of USDA Service Centers, please visit
<http://www.ga.nrcs.usda.gov/>***

Georgia Forestry Commission District Offices



5645 Riggins Mill Road
 Dry Branch, GA 31020
 1-800-GA-TREES (428-7337)
 GaTrees.org

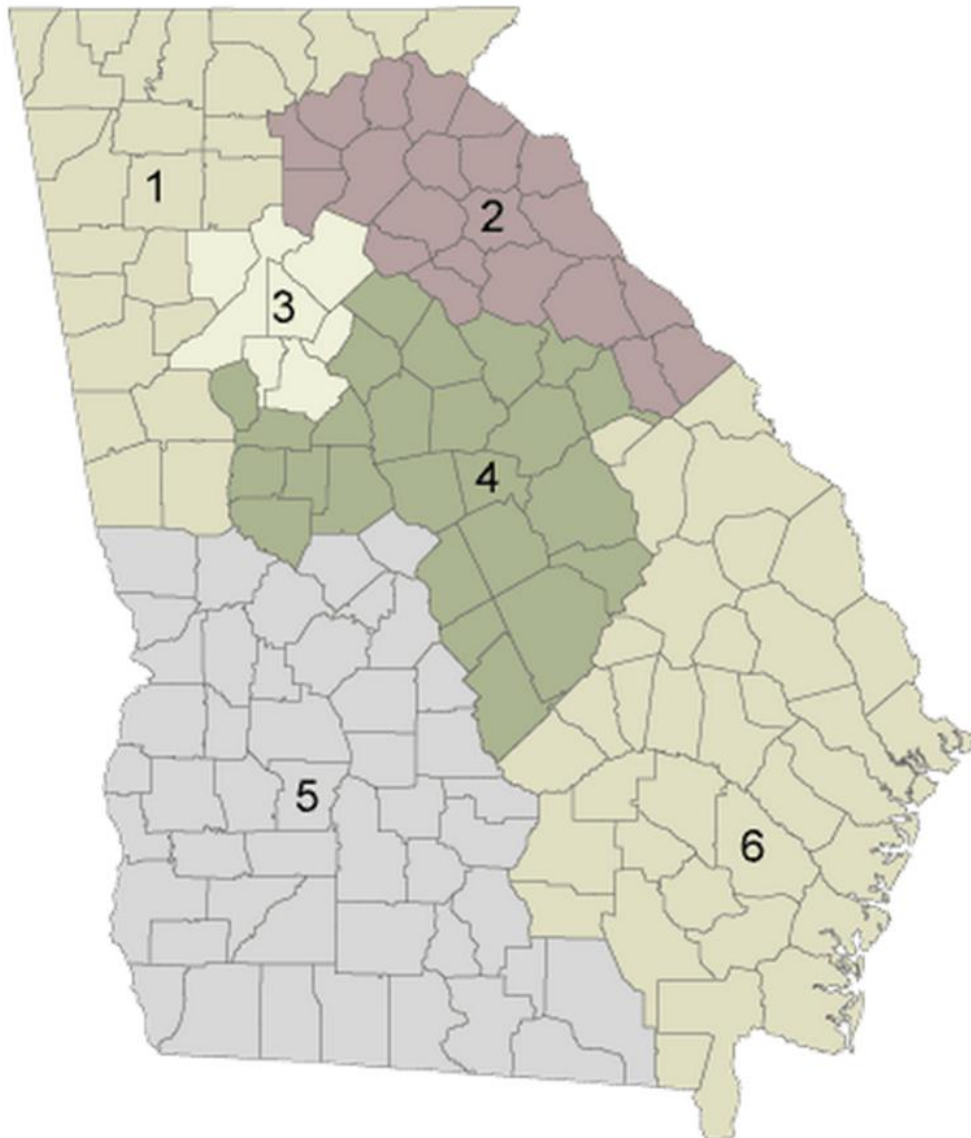
Districts



- Coosa District - 1
770.531.6043
- Flint District - 2
229.522.3580
- Oconee District - 3
478.445.5164
- Chattahoochee District
770.254.7218
- Satilla District - 5
912.287.4915
- Ogeechee District - 6
229.868.3385
- * State Headquarters
478.751.3500

Georgia Soil and Water Conservation District Regional Offices

<p style="text-align: center;">Region 1 700 East 2nd Avenue Rome, GA 30161-3359 (706)295-6131</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Region 2 PO Box 8024 Athens, GA 30603 (706)552-4486</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Region 3 1500 Klondike Road, Suite A109 Conyers, GA 30094 (770)761-3020</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Region 4 3014 Heritage Road Suite 1 Milledgeville, GA 31061 (478)445-4913</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Region 5 4344 Albany Highway Dawson, GA 39842 (229)995-5605</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Region 6 151 Langston Chapel Road, Suite 700 Statesboro, GA 30459 (912)871-1429</p>



Qualified Land Trusts for the Georgia State Tax Credit (Feb., 2012)

Athens Land Trust 685 N. Pope Street Athens, GA 30601 (706) 613-0122 www.athenslandtrust.org	Georgia Agricultural Land Trust P.O. Box 1680 Carrollton, GA 30117 (770) 656-6743 www.georgiafarmland.org	Newton County Land Trust Alliance P.O. Box 208 Covington, GA 30015-0208 (770) 786-4390
Central Savannah River Land Trust P.O. Box 148 Augusta, GA 30903 (706) 312-5263 www.csrllt.org	Georgia Department of Natural Resources 2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, Suite 1454 East Atlanta, GA 30334-9000 (404) 656-9173 www.georgiawildlife.org	North American Land Trust P.O. Box 467 Chadds Ford, PA 19317 (706) 338-2157 www.nalt.org
Mountain Conservation Trust of Georgia 104 North Main Street, Suite B3 Jasper, GA 30143 (706) 253-4077 www.mctga.org	Georgia Forestry Commission 1055 E. Whitehall Road Athens, GA 30605 (706) 553-4443 www.gfc.state.ga.gov	Ocmulgee Land Trust P.O. Box 6437, 479 Cherry St. Macon, GA 31201 (404) 464-5338
Oconee River Land Trust 380 Meigs Street Athens, GA 30601 (706) 552-3138 www.ortl.com	Georgia Land Trust 428 Bull Street, Suite 210 Savannah, GA 31401 (912) 231-0507 www.galandtrust.org	SE Regional Land Conservancy 6111 Peachtree-Dunwoody Road, Bldg E, Suite 102 Atlanta, GA 30328 (770) 351-0411 x307 www.serlc.org
Tall Timbers Land Conservancy 13093 Henry Beadel Drive Tallahassee, FL 32312-0918 (850) 893-4153 x238 www.talltimbers.org	Georgia Piedmont Land Trust P.O. Box 3687 Suwanee, GA 30024 (770) 945-3111 www.gplt.org	Southern Conservation Trust 192 McIntosh Trail Peachtree City, GA 30269 (770) 846-4730 www.sctlandtrust.org
Atlantic Coast Conservancy 634 S. Main Street Jasper, GA 30143 (706) 273-9173 www.atlanticcoastconservancy.org	Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission 4310 Lexington Road, P.O. Box 8024 Athens, GA 30603 (706) 552-4470 www.gaswcc.ga.gov	St. Simons Land Trust P.O. Box 24615 St. Simons Island, GA 31522 (912) 638-9185 www.sslt.org
Audubon Environmental Land Trust, Inc 1000 Saint Albans Drive, Suite 350 Raleigh, NC 27609 (919) 414-2611 www.aelandtrust.org	Georgia Wildlife Federation 11600 Hazelbrand Road Covington, GA 30014 (770) 787-7887 www.gwf.org	The Conservation Fund 4500 Hugh Howell Road, Suite 470 Tucker, GA 30084 (770) 414-0211 www.conservationfund.org
Chattahoochee Valley Land Trust P.O. Box 175 Columbus, GA 31902 (404) 861-8567 www.galandtrust.org	Historic Savannah Foundation 321 East York Street Savannah, GA 31405 (912) 233-7787 www.myHSF.org	The Nature Conservancy 1330 West Peachtree Street, Suite 410 Atlanta, GA 30309-2904 (404) 873-6946 www.nature.org/Georgia
Chattooga Conservancy 8 Sequoia Hills Lane Clayton, GA 30525 (706) 782-6097 www.chattoogariver.org	Livable Buckhead, Inc. 3340 Peachtree Road NE, Suite #1640 Atlanta, GA 30326 (404) 842-2682 www.livablebuckhead.org	Trust for Public Land 600 W. Peachtree Street NW, Suite 1840 Atlanta, GA 30308 (404) 873-7306 www.tpl.org
Chattawah Open Land Trust 226 Old Ladiga Road Piedmont, AL 36272 (912) 231-0507 www.galandtrust.org	National Wild Turkey Federation 770 Augusta Road Edgefield, SC 29824 (706) 554-0592 www.nwtf.org	Wetlands Foundation 10745 Westside Way, Suite 100 Alpharetta, GA 30009 (770) 541-4200
Elachee Nature Science Center 2125 Elachee Drive Gainesville, GA 3050 (770) 535-1976 www.elachee.org		

*In addition, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, the Georgia Forestry Commission, and local governments are qualified to hold conservation easements.

Other Pertinent Organizations

American Farmland Trust

(336)221-0707
<http://www.farmland.org>

Georgia Development Authority

Georgia Development Authority
Administrative Office
1890 Highway 138
Monroe, Georgia 30655
800-376-FARM (3276)
<http://www.gdaonline.com/>

Georgia Department of Agriculture

19 Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr., S.W.
Atlanta, GA 30334
(404)656-3645
<http://agr.georgia.gov/>

Georgia Department of Natural Resources

2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, S.E., Suite1252
East Tower
Atlanta, GA 30334
(404)656-3500
<http://www.gadnr.org/>

Georgia Farm Bureau

1620 Bass Road
P.O. Box 7068
Macon, GA 31209
(478)474-8411
<http://www.gfb.org>

Georgia Department of Revenue

1800 Century Center Blvd., N.E.
Atlanta, GA 30345-3205
(877)GADOR11 (1-877-423-6711)
<https://etax.dor.ga.gov/>

Georgia Land Conservation Center

380 Meigs Street
Athens, Georgia 30601
(706)-546-7507
<http://www.galandcc.com/>