

2020 Organic Certification Cost Share Program Guidelines

Organic farms and companies that sell, process, or package certified organic agricultural products are eligible to receive 50% of certification-related costs incurred (see #2), with a maximum of \$500 per operation or category if they meet the following criteria:

- They received initial or continuation/renewal of certification or are in the process of becoming certified organic to USDA National Organic Program (NOP) standards between October 1, 2019 and September 30, 2020, and
- The certified operation is located in Wisconsin.

Funding for this program is provided by and contingent upon funds provided by cooperative agreement between the FSA and the WI Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection. (DATCP).

Frequently Asked Questions and Suggestions

1. To qualify, does my certified farm or handling operation have to be located in Wisconsin?

Answer: Yes. The owner/operator can live out of State, but the operation must be physically located in WI.

2. What kind of costs will the program reimburse?

Answer: Application, certification, inspection, user fees (from milk checks, too). Late fees, membership fees and penalties are not eligible.

3. How does DATCP determine my eligibility?

Answer: We review the documents you submit and verify current certification and invoices with your certifier.

4. What documentation do I need for reimbursement?

- Completed application form
- A copy of a certificate or letter from your certifier proving that you received initial or continuation/renewal of certification between 10/1/19 and 9/30/20;
- Copies of itemized, paid invoice(s) from your certifier documenting certification-related costs incurred and paid between 10/1/19 and 9/30/20 that you want us to use in computing your claim. Cancelled checks or invoices that do not show proof of payment (such as a date paid and zero balance indicated by the certifier) are not an acceptable form of documentation. Incomplete applications cannot be processed.
- **PLEASE NOTE: Since verification from the certifier is part of DATCP's process, you can choose to allow your certifier to provide proof of**

certification and expenses rather than submitting this information yourself.
If you would prefer this – only submit your application and your W9.

- A W9 form, an official form needed by all state agencies when providing payments to citizens or businesses, unless you have a current W9 on file already. If you applied for cost share through DATCP in 2019, your W9 is on file.

5. How much am I eligible for?

Answer: Payment will be for 50% of your certification costs up to a maximum of \$500.

- If you maintain certification in more than one category/scope such as crop, livestock or handler, and paid fees for each, you may be eligible for up to a \$500 reimbursement for each category.
- Payment depends upon the total organic certification costs you paid between October 1, 2019 and September 30, 2020.
- You DO NOT need to submit a separate application for each scope of certification you hold but be sure to make it clear how many types of certifications you have (crops, livestock, handler, etc.)

6. Can I participate if I received a payment in a previous year?

Answer: Yes, you may receive one cost-share payment annually.

7. Does certification from any certifying agency count?

Answer: You must receive National Organic Program (NOP) organic certification from a USDA-accredited certifying agency. If you have questions about the accreditation status of your certifier, call your certifier or check with the NOP www.ams.usda.gov/nop

8. When should I apply?

Answer: We will begin accepting applications on August 19, 2020. The program is administered on a first-come, first-served basis, and cost shares will be distributed as long as funds are available. You should submit your application once you are certain you have incurred all expenses eligible for reimbursement between 10/1/19 and 9/30/20 or you have paid out more than \$1000 per certification scope (reached your maximum eligible reimbursement).

Applications must be postmarked/emailed on or before December 31, 2020. Late applications may be denied.

9. Where do I send the application?

Answer: Mail or email applications and materials to:

Sharon Haberkorn
DATCP-DAD
PO Box 8911
Madison, WI 53708
datcporganiccostshare@wi.gov
Phone: (608) 224-5112

11. I have more questions, who can I contact?

Answer: person listed above

Tips for completing W9 forms accurately

There are directions listed on the next few page that may also provide additional helpful information. Incorrect information in the W9 is the most common reason Cost Share payments get delayed.

- Be sure to fill out the form in its entirety. Be sure you choose an entity designation, provide a social security number or EIN, and sign the bottom of the form. If any of these items are missing, we cannot process your Cost Share payment.
- If you are uncertain about anything on the W9, your best answers will come from your tax preparer.
- Legal Name and Trade Name can be confusing. Only fill out your trade name if you want your check to be made out to the entity listed as your trade name and it is different from your legal name. If you file your taxes under your legal name, not a trade name, you most likely don't want to list a trade name.
- Remit Address vs. Primary Address: Your remit address is where you want your check to be mailed. Your primary address is most likely where the farm/business is located.
- If you are a married couple, you CANNOT put both your names on this form. The Legal entity is a person or business. The person or business has a Social Security or EIN number. More than one person cannot be listed on a W9
- EIN or Social Security Number: If you are a corporation or in most cases, an LLC partnership, you should provide an EIN number. A social security number usually suffices for the other options. Be sure to check the box stating which you provided. Without this number, we cannot process your payment. We do not give out these numbers as part of public records and keep any forms with this information locked.