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Feed Management (CPS 592) Qualification and Certification Training

September 12, 2024 10:30am to 5:00pm CST

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Purpose



Provide an overview of USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Technical Service Provider (TSP) Program.

Topics:

- Intro to the TSP Program
- TSP opportunities
- Receiving Payment
- Finding a TSP
- TSP Roles & Responsibilities
- TSP Application/Certification process
- Intro to the TSP website/resources



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Technical Service Provider Program

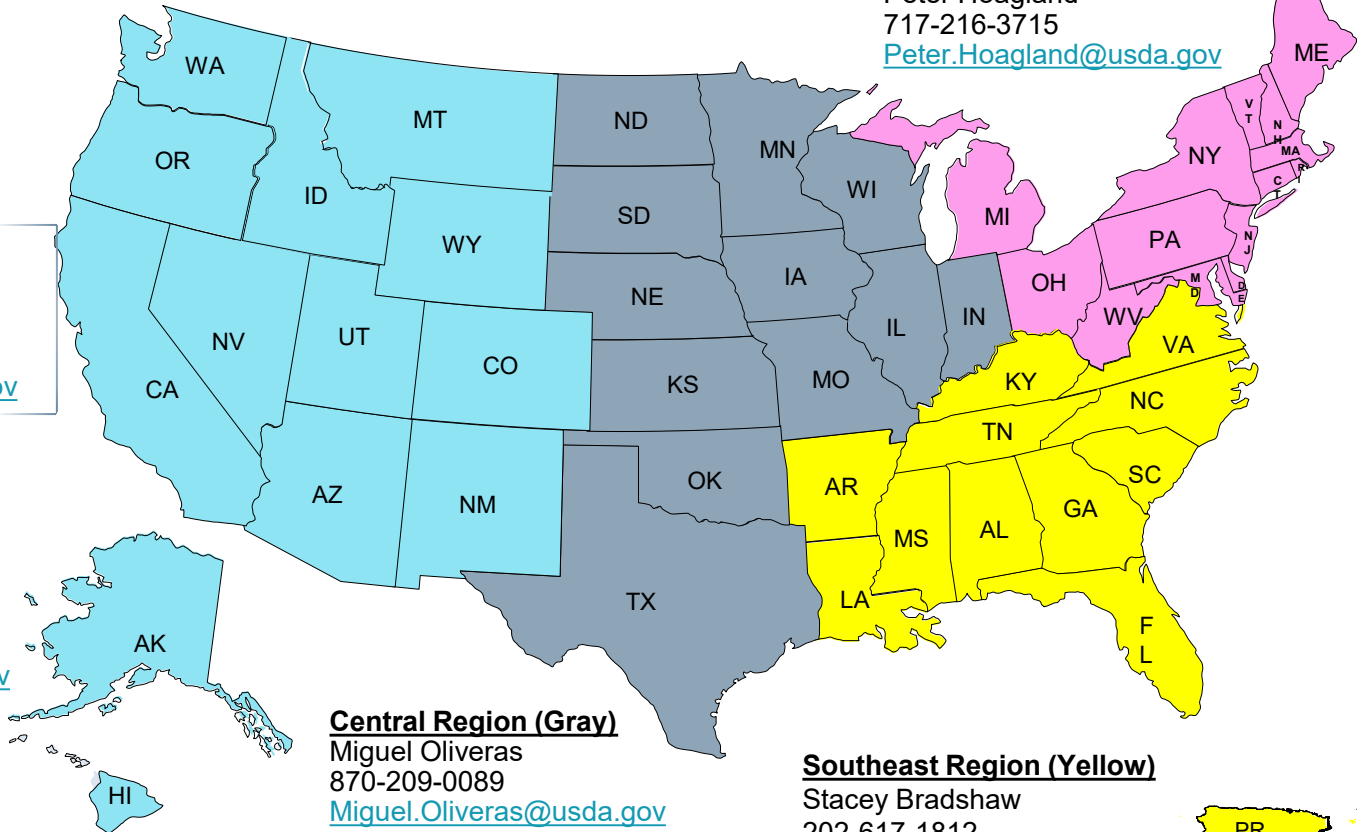
TSP Regional Coordinators by Region



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Updated 10/12/2023

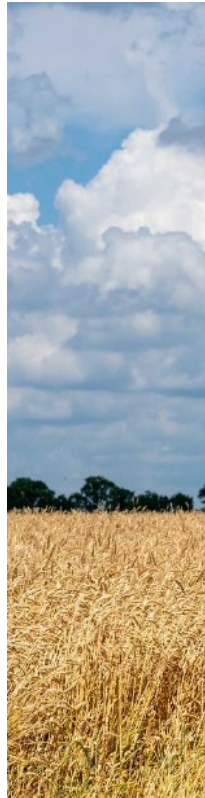


What is a Certified Technical Service Provider (TSP)?

A Certified TSP is an individual, entity (business, nonprofit, or similar organization), Indian tribe, or public agency who is certified by NRCS and on the approved list to provide technical services to eligible participants.

TSPs may provide technical services to eligible participants

1. in conservation planning,
2. education and outreach, and
3. assistance with design and implementation of conservation practices



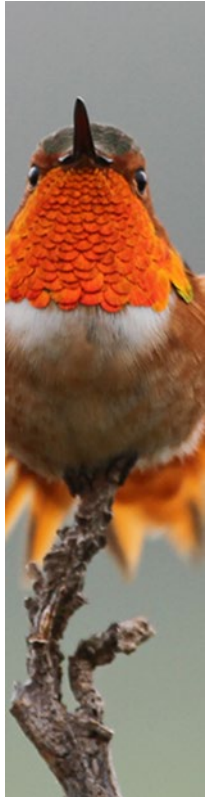
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Who are TSP Customers?

- **Participants in USDA Farm Bill Programs**
 - Producers
 - Landowners
 - Tribes
- **Agreements and Contracts**
 - Non-profit organizations
 - Public agencies
 - NRCS



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TSP Program Source



Law/Authority

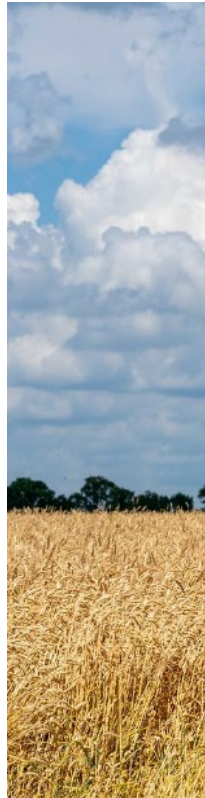
- Food Security Act of 1985, as amended
- Codified in [16 U.S.C. § 3842](#), Delivery of technical assistance

Regulation

- 7 CFR 652 – Technical Service Provider Assistance

NRCS Directives

- **Manual – Policies - 440-504-M, TSP Program Manual**
- **This manual contains the NRCS policy for the Technical Service Provider (TSP) Program**



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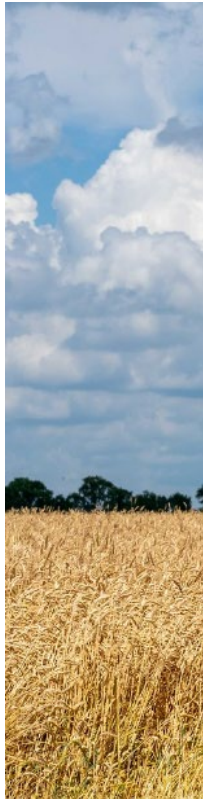
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Food Security Act of 1985

Requires the Secretary to deliver technical assistance to eligible participants for implementation of its Title XII Programs and the conservation activities:

- Directly,
- Through an agreement with a third party provider,
- Or **at the option of the producer** through payment to the producer for an approved third party provider



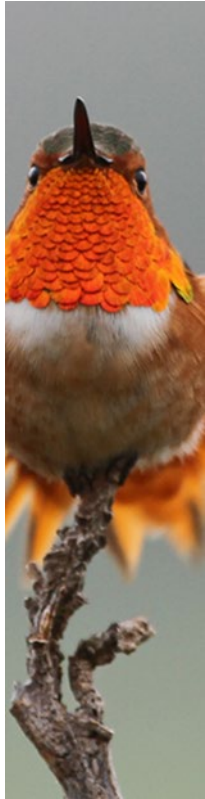
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Participant acquisition of technical services

- Participants may obtain technical assistance directly from the Department or, when available, from a TSP.
- To acquire technical assistance directly from the Department, participants should contact their local USDA Service Center.
- If acquiring technical services from a TSP, participants must:
 - Enter into and comply with a program contract prior to acquiring technical services;
 - Select a certified TSP from the approved list of TSPs.



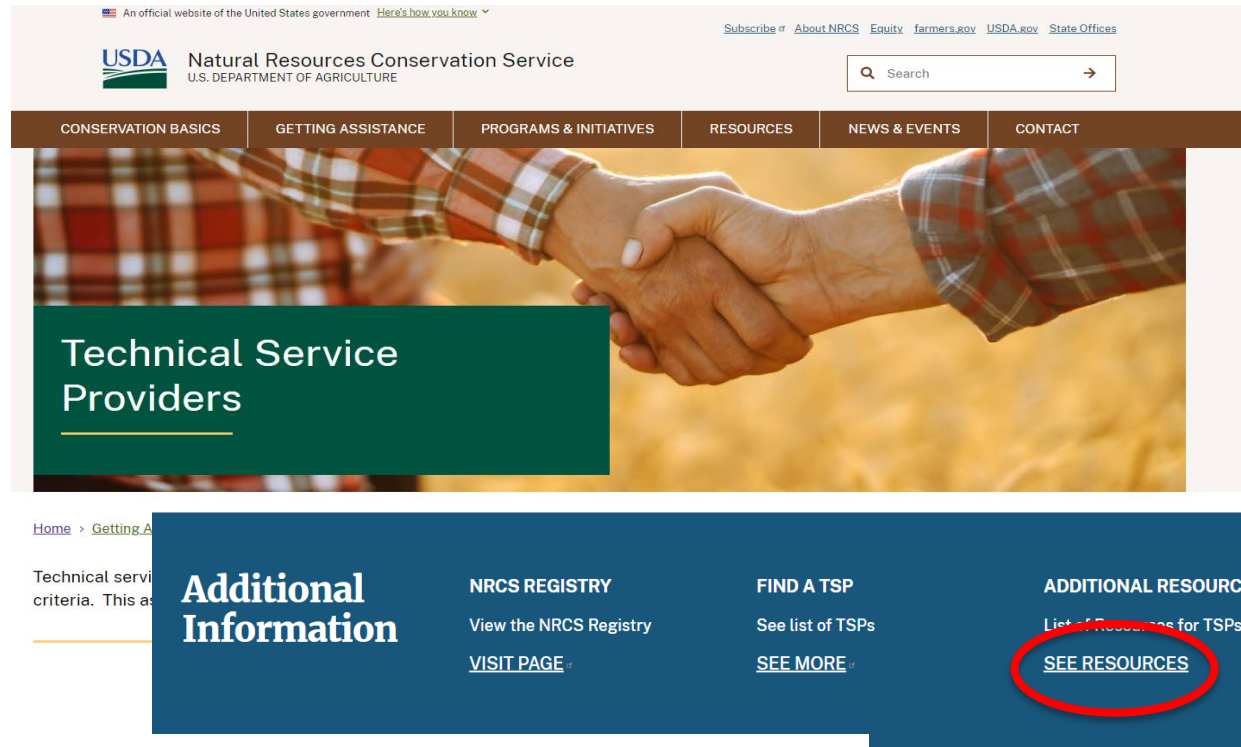
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Accessing TSP Regulation, Policy and Manual

From the [TSP website](#):

1. Look for Additional TSP Resources
2. Scroll to find TSP Policy and Regulations
3. Link to Regulation, Policy, Manual and others.



TSP Policy and Regulations

- [Technical Service Provider Assistance Regulation](#) (7CFR, Part 652)
- [Technical Service Provider Assistance Policy](#) (GM 180, Part 411)
- [Technical Service Provider Assistance Manual](#) (Title 440, Part 504)
- [Conservation Planning Manual](#) (GM 180, Part 409)
- [National Planning Procedures Handbook \(NPPH\)](#) (Handbooks Title 180, Part 600)
- [eDirectives](#)

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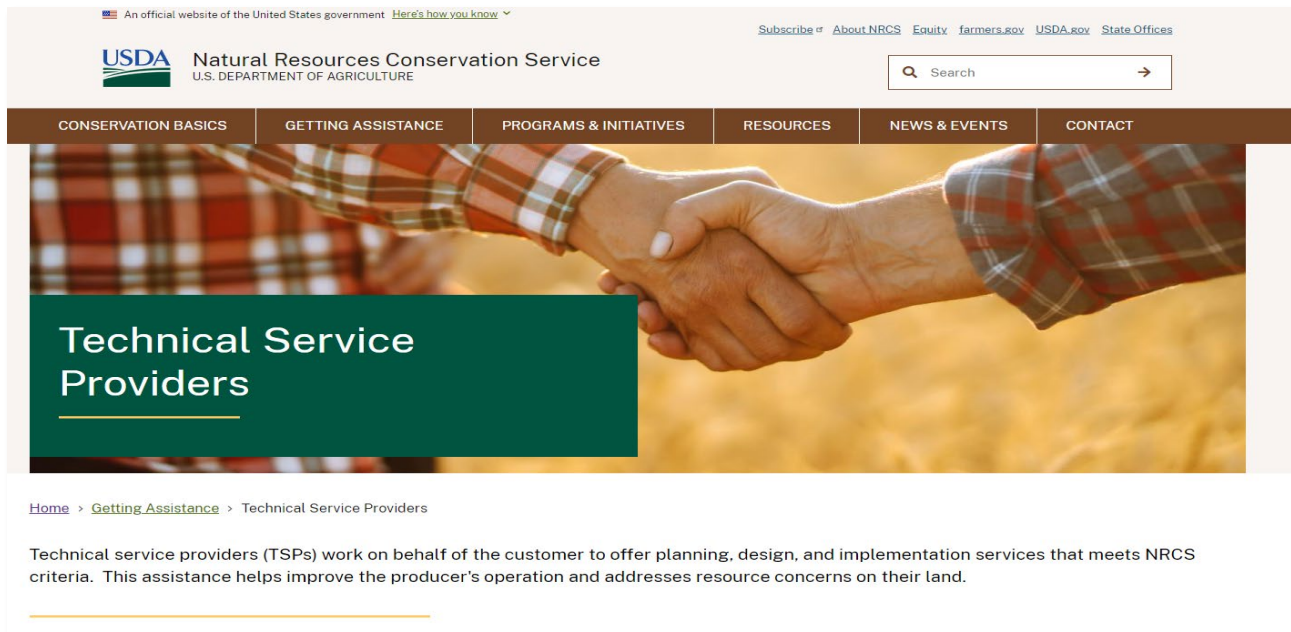


TSP Program Website

The TSP Program website has **training guides** and **videos** on how to use the NRCS Registry. It also lets you know about upcoming program changes or trainings.

The TSP Program website is a one-stop shop for all things related to the TSP program.

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/getting-assistance/technical-assistance/technical-service-providers>



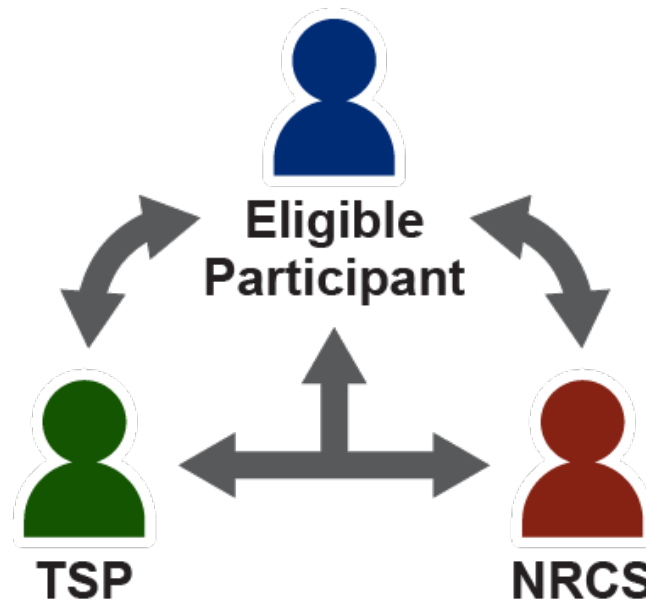
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TSP Roles and Responsibilities

- As a TSP, you will take part in a collaborative conservation planning process.
- You need to be aware of how your roles and responsibilities mesh with those of the eligible participant and NRCS.
- Ultimately, the TSP, the eligible participant, and NRCS all work toward the same goal: **“Getting conservation on the ground that meets NRCS standards and specifications.”**



TSP Role in Conservation Planning

That's you!

- The TSP is the **specialist in their field** and has many responsibilities.
- This may include developing conservation planning activities, preparing designs, or overseeing installation and checkout of practice(s).
- Additional responsibilities may include preparing deliverables.

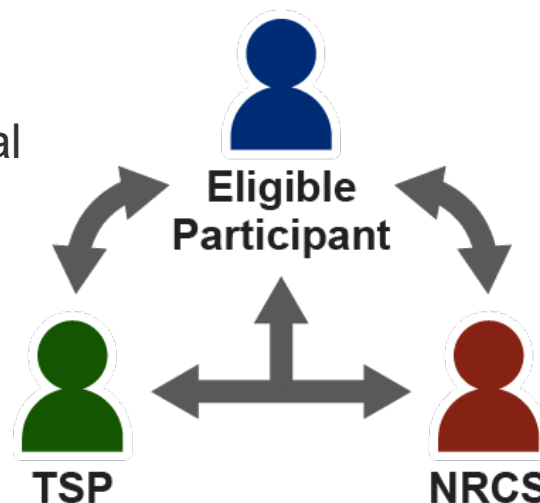
Note: Some TSP duties will overlap with NRCS's. The TSP's duties are divided into three categories:

- (1) Providing technical services,*
- (2) contracting with their client, and*
- (3) coordinating between all parties.*



TSP: Technical Services Concerning the Client

- Ensure you are **delivering a high-quality product to your client that meets NRCS technical standards and specifications.**
- Per your TSP Certification Agreement, the technical services you offer must follow the appropriate statutory and regulatory requirements and comply with all Federal, State, Tribal, and local laws.
- **Keep client plans confidential.** Plans should not be shared without client permission.
- **Assume responsibility** for the technical services you provide.



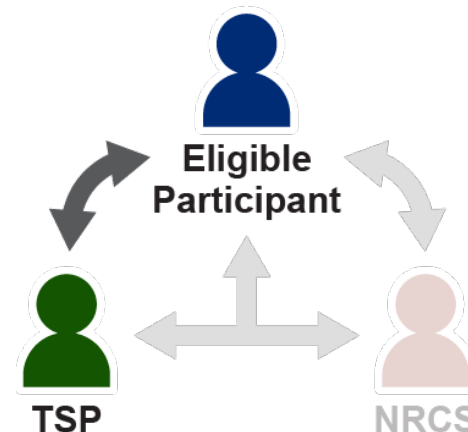
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TSP: Contract Responsibilities Concerning the Client

- For the protection of yourself and your client, completing **a written contract that includes costs, timelines, and deliverables signed by both parties** is highly recommended.
- Obtaining a written contract with a client that clearly defines expectations and deliverables protects both you and the client should a dispute arise.
 - NRCS will not get involved in disputes unless the product does not meet NRCS standards. NRCS will only say what is wrong with the deliverable and won't settle the dispute.
- Utilize the services of certified subcontractors, as NRCS policy allows.



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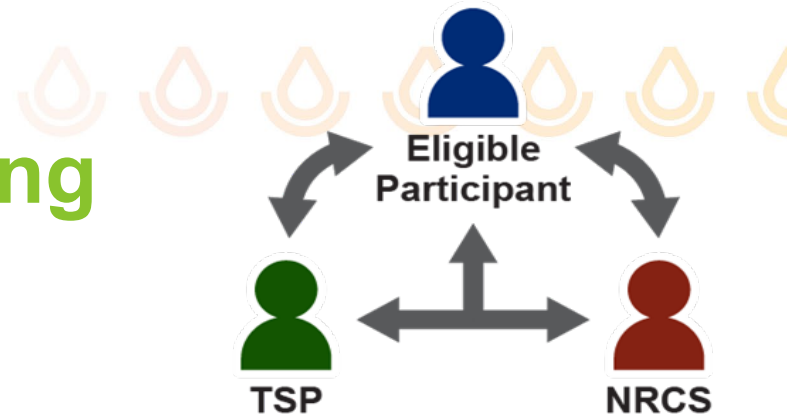


TSP: Contract Responsibilities Concerning the Client (Cont.)

- TSP is not involved with administrative and program responsibilities
- NRCS retains administrative and program which includes:
 - Participant eligibility,
 - Ranking applications,
 - Approving/modifying contracts,
 - Processing payments,
 - Complying with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).



TSP: Coordination Responsibilities Concerning the Pre-Site Visit



Coordinate with NRCS and the eligible participant to set up a pre-site visit.

Explain to the eligible participant how NRCS conducts the conservation planning process.

Explain to the landowner that they, as the conservation program contract holder, **make all the decisions** on their property.

Remind the eligible participant that NRCS will communicate directly with them and request that they keep you in the loop by asking them to sign the **Release of Information (ROI) form. (NRCS-CPA-70 / 1270).**

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TSP: Coordination Responsibilities Concerning Technical Services

- Work with the eligible participant to help ensure that all approvals, authorities, rights, permits, and easements necessary for the implementation, operation, and maintenance of conservation practices have been obtained prior to the conservation practice installation.
- Communicate any technical issues immediately to NRCS.
- Confirm the eligible participant's decisions in writing
- Provide copies of all work products and deliverables
- Must complete the "My Completed Work" section in the NRCS Registry.
- Final invoice for your technical services.



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Working with NRCS: Develop Relationships

In addition to building relationships with clients, you also need to build relationships with NRCS which includes:

- Introduce yourself to local staff.
- Attend local NRCS public trainings or workshops.
- Attend conservation district meetings.
- Keep NRCS field office staff in the loop about your activities and meetings with clients.
- Ask NRCS how much notice you should give them before project implementation begins.



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Roles & Responsibility Summary

The ultimate goal of the conservation partnership is to **get conservation on the ground**.

Conservation planning is the foundation for all technical services provided by NRCS and TSPs.

The key team members involved in conservation planning are the following:

- TSP
- Eligible participant
- NRCS

All involved need to communicate and collaborate effectively to ensure the success of the client's conservation efforts.

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TSP Opportunities



TSPs can be paid for the following technical services:

1. Developing a Conservation Planning Activity (CPA)
2. Developing a Design and Implementation Activity (DIA)
3. Developing a Conservation Evaluation and Monitoring Activity (CEMA)
4. Implementing a conservation practice (design, implementation, checkout)

Funding for your TSP technical services comes from two funding sources:

Financial Assistance (FA) - allocated from the Farm Bill program funds.

Technical Assistance (TA) - allocated from the Conservation Technical Assistance funds.



TSP services: CPA, DIA, CEMA

Development

- **Conservation Planning Activities (CPA)**
 - Steps 1-7 in the Planning Process
 - Requires a Certified Technical Service Provider
- **Design and Implementation Activities (DIA)**
 - Step 8 in the Planning Process
 - Requires a Certified Technical Service Provider
- **Conservation Evaluation and Monitoring Activities (CEMA)**
 - Can be adopted at anytime within the Planning Process as appropriate
 - Does not require a Certified Technical Service Provider
 - But does require that the delivery is completed by a Qualified Individual



Implementing a conservation practice (design, implementation, checkout)

- Meeting the state adopted NRCS Conservation Practice Standards (CPS) and Statements of Work (SOW) included in the participant's conservation plan or EQIP Contract.
- TSP must refer to planning documents in a state's FOTG Section 4.



Feed Management (CPS 592)

Conservation Practice Standard:



United States Department of Agriculture

592-CPS-1

Natural Resources Conservation Service

CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD

FEED MANAGEMENT

CODE 592

(au)

DEFINITION

Manipulating and controlling the quantity and quality of available nutrients, feedstuffs, ingredients, or additives fed to livestock and poultry.

PURPOSE

This practice is used to accomplish one or more of the following purposes:

- **Water Quality.**—Prevent excess nutrients in surface and ground water by reducing the quantity of nitrogen, phosphorus, sulfur, salts, and other nutrients excreted in the manure.
- **Water Quality.**—Prevent excess pathogens and chemicals from manure, biosolids, or compost applications by reducing their quantity and viability in manure.
- **Air Quality.**—Reduce emissions of ammonia, odors, greenhouse gases, volatile organic compounds, and dust from animal feeding operations.

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Feed Management (SOW 592)



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STATEMENT OF WORK Feed Management (592) Oklahoma

These deliverables apply to this individual practice. For deliverables for other planned practices, refer to those specific Statements of Work.

DESIGN

Deliverables

1. Design documents that demonstrate criteria in NRCS practice standard have been met and are compatible with planned and applied practices
 - a. Practice purpose(s) as identified in the conservation plan.
 - b. List all required and/or facilitating practices
 - c. Practice standard criteria-related computations and analyses to develop plans and specifications including but not limited to:
 - i. Kind, size and number of livestock
 - ii. Diet recommendations
 - iii. Feed analysis
 - iv. Manure analysis
 - v. Actions taken to reduce pathogens, odor, or Greenhouse Gases
2. Specification sheet provided to the client that adequately describes the requirements to apply the practice and obtain necessary permits.
3. Operation and maintenance plan
4. Certification that the design meets practice standard criteria and comply with applicable laws and regulations
5. Design modifications during application as required

Note: Oklahoma CPS 592 Feed Management Information Sheet is available to provide to the producer.

INSTALLATION

Deliverables

1. Pre-application conference with client
2. Application guidance as needed
3. Facilitate and implement required design modifications with client and original designer
4. Advise client/NRCS on compliance issues with all federal, state, tribal, and local laws, regulations and NRCS policies during application.
5. Certification that the application process and materials meets design and permit requirements

Note: Oklahoma CPS 592 Feed Management Information Sheet is available to provide to the producer.

CHECK OUT

Deliverables

1. Records of application
 - a. Extent of practice units applied
 - b. Actual materials used
2. Certification that the application meets NRCS standards and specifications and is in compliance with permits
3. Progress reporting
4. Exit conference with client and contractor.



TSP Certification Options

Certification

Education & Experience

Experience



State Law (Statement is on all options)

Submit documentation for any additional licensing, certification, registration, permits, training or other requirement need for this practice if required by federal, state, local, or tribal law or regulation.



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Feed Management (CPS 592) Certification Option



Professional Certification

Certification in at least one of the following:

- 1) American Registry of Professional Animal Scientists (ARPAS): Professional Animal Scientist (PAS); or
- 2) State Accredited Animal Nutritionist entity in State where applicable.

Technical Training

Certify completion of the following NRCS Courses:

- 1) TSP Orientation and Conservation Planning
- 2) Introduction to the Field Office Technical Guide

Feed Management (CPS 592)

Education and Experience Option

Education and Experience

- 1) Bachelor's or higher degree in Animal Sciences or Animal Nutrition.
- 2) Demonstrate at least 4 years experience for Bachelors' Degree, or 2 years for Masters' Degree, or 1 year for PhD in providing technical assistance to clients with feed management.

Technical Training

Certify completion of the following NRCS Courses:

- 1) TSP Orientation and Conservation Planning
- 2) Introduction to the Field Office Technical Guide



United States Department of Agriculture

NRCS Registry - Find a TSP Website



NRCS Registry of Technical Service Providers

Advanced Filters**Simple Search**

Filter By Location

State

ALL STATES

County

Filter By Practice

Practice Code

All

101 - (DIA) CNMP Design and Implementation Activity

102 - (CAP) Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan

102 - (CPA) Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan

104 - (CAP) Nutrient Management Plan

106 - (CAP) Forest Management Plan

Practice Name

All

Access Control

Access Road

Agrichemical Handling Facility

(DIA) Agricultural Erosion Control

B = Business TSP I = Individual TSP

Showing 0 results

Print Results

NRCS Registry allows agricultural producers and private landowners to locate a certified TSP in their local area.

<https://nrcs.my.salesforce-sites.com/FindaTSP>



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504.11 Certification Process

5. Within 60 days of NRCS receiving a complete application from an individual, a regional TSP certifier must make a determination to certify or defer each technical service (practice or activity) on the application. If all requirements are met, the regional TSP certifier will:

- a. Enter into a certification agreement on behalf of NRCS and certify the applicant as qualified to provide technical services for specific practices or categories of technical service;
- b. Place the applicant on the list of certified TSPs; and
- c. Make available to the public the list of certified TSPs by practice or category of technical services.



Finding a TSP



FOR LANDOWNERS

Who Can Use a TSP?

When funds are available, agricultural producers participating in certain activities in NRCS conservation programs can hire a TSP within the 50 states, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. As a producer, you will need to work with your local NRCS office staff to make application for Financial Assistance and have an obligated contract prior to hiring a TSP. NOTE: Producers may also choose to pay for services from qualified individuals at their own expense.

NRCS reimburses the producer at a contracted rate established by the program the participation is participating in. The maximum rates for technical services are available in the [most recent State Payment Schedule](#).

What Technical Service Activities are Offered?

TSP conservation work falls into two broad categories:

- planning, design and implementation of conservation practices
- conservation planning activities

Farmers, ranchers and forest landowners can use conservation planning to address specific natural resource objectives such as nutrient and pest management, forestry, energy conservation, or transitioning to organic agriculture.

Participants in NRCS's Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) may be eligible to receive financial assistance to work with TSPs to develop conservation planning activity plans or to plan, design and implement individual or group of conservation practices. Only certified TSPs can assist with the development of conservation planning activities.

If approved for an EQIP contract that includes TSP services, the participant chooses a TSP from an NRCS-approved list and negotiates payment for the selected TSP's services. Once technical services are completed, the TSP provides documentation and an invoice to the participant who then provides the documentation (invoices) and/or notification of completion to NRCS for certification and reimbursement.

How Do You Locate a TSP?

Eligible NRCS conservation program participants can locate a certified TSP through the NRCS Registry national directory for [finding a TSP](#) ^g. Program participants also can contact their [local USDA service center](#).

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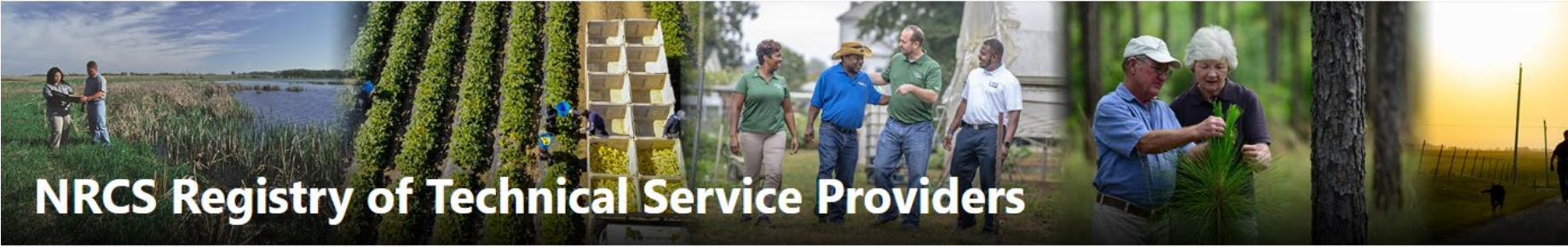
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Finding a TSP



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NRCS Registry of Technical Service Providers

Advanced Filters

Simple Search

Filter By Location

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ALL STATES

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Filter By Practice

Practice Code

All

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102 - (CAP) Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan

102 - (CPA) Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan

104 - (CAP) Nutrient Management Plan

106 - (CAP) Forest Management Plan

B = Business TSP I = Individual TSP

Showing 0 results



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TSP Application Process



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Application Process in NRCS Registry

To become a Certified TSP, you will need to successfully complete and submit a new application in NRCS Registry.



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TSP Application Step 1: Plan



Step 1: Make a plan to be a TSP

Determine the technical services you want to offer NRCS program participants.

Determine if you have the necessary skills, abilities, licenses, certifications, and other qualifications to provide services based on Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) standards and specifications and certification criteria.

Familiarize yourself with any State laws which may apply to your technical services.





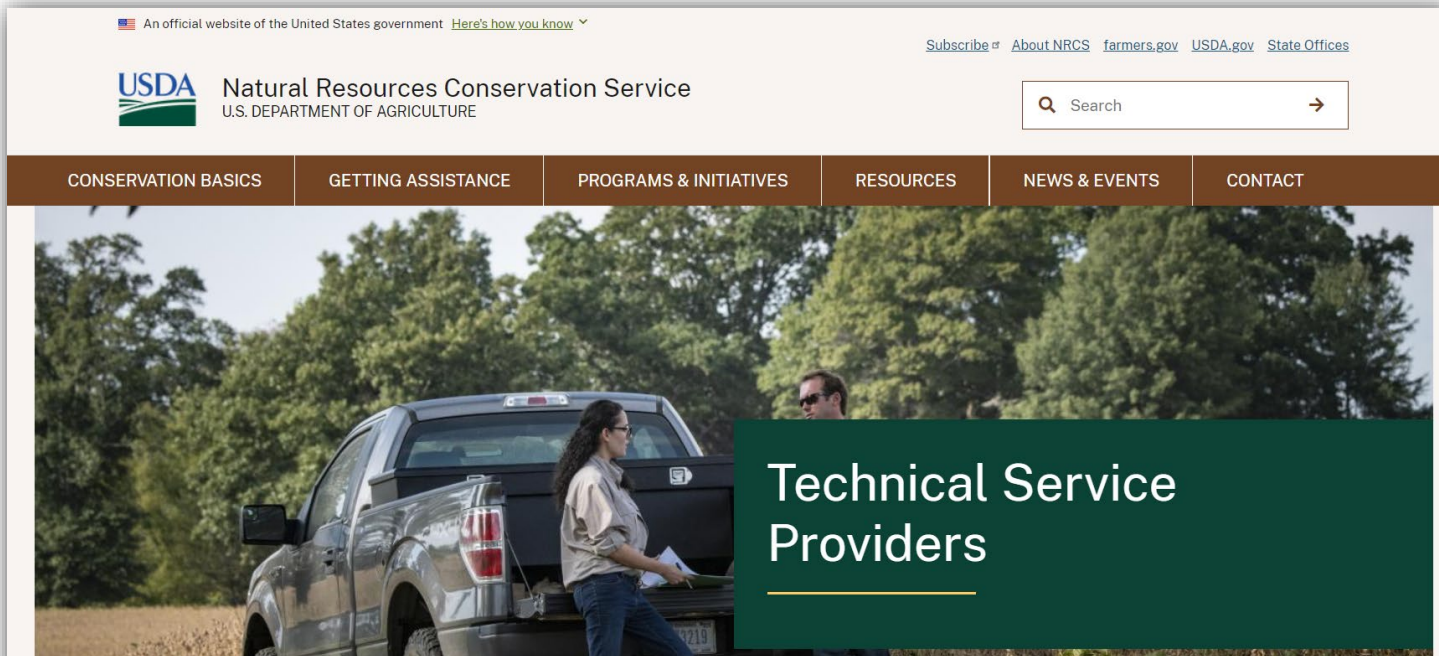
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Review the TSP Program Website

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The TSP Program website is your one-stop shop for all things related to the TSP program.

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/getting-assistance/technical-assistance/technical-service-providers>



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TSP Application Step 2: Login.gov

Step 2: Create your USDA verified Login.gov account (formerly eAuthentication account or Level 2).

1. Enter your email address at https://secure.login.gov/sign_up/enter_email
2. **Check your email** for a message from Login.gov.
3. Click the “**Confirm your email address**” button in the message. This will take you back to the Login.gov website.
4. Create your Login.gov **password**.
5. Set up a second layer of security (**multi-factor authentication**). You can choose from several authentication options:
 - Security key
 - Text Message
 - Face or touch unlock
 - Phone Call





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Login.gov

https://secure.login.gov/sign_up/enter_email



 An official website of the United States government [Here's how you know](#) ▾

 LOGIN.GOV

Sign in

Create an account

Create an account for new users

Enter your email address

Select your email language preference

Login.gov allows you to receive your email communication in English, Spanish or French.

☒ English (default)

☐ Español

☐ Français

☐ I read and accept the Login.gov [Rules of Use](#) 

Submit



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TSP Application Step 3: Verification

Step 3: Verify your identity

Login.gov can verify your identity using personal information you submit online.

Alternative methods for identity verification are also available including USDA Local Regulation Authorities (LRAs).

Requirements for identity verification. You will need all the following:

1. Your **State-Issued ID uploaded** to Login.gov. You can upload a photo of your ID by phone or by computer.
2. **Social Security number**
3. Your **phone number**



TSP Application Step 4: Registry Login

Step 4: Log into NRCS Registry

NRCS uses an online system called NRCS Registry to accept, approve and manage TSP applications and certifications.

This system will track a TSPs Licenses, trainings, work experience, and all other items required for certification.

What is NRCS's Online TSP Registry?

NRCS Registry allows individuals seeking TSP certification to begin the application process and once certified to maintain and renew their certification. NRCS Registry also allows agricultural producers and private forest landowners to locate a certified TSP in their local area.

- New and certified TSPs can [Log into NRCS Registry](#) [†]
- Landowners looking for assistance can [Find a TSP](#) [†]



TSP Application Step 5: Training

Step 5: Complete training requirements

NRCS offers courses through the Agricultural Learning Service (AgLearn) and the Conservation Webinar portal.

AgLearn access requires an account to be set up for TSP applicants.

Contact your Regional or State TSP Coordinator to request an AgLearn account.

All TSP applicants seeking TSP certification must complete the following training:

1. **TSP Orientation and Conservation Planning Course (ID# NRCS-NEDC-000191)**
2. **Introduction to Field Office Technical Guide (ID# NRCS-NEDC-000149)**



AgLearn



CONSERVATION
OF NATURAL RESOURCES
WEBINAR PORTAL

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TSP Application Step 6: Apply

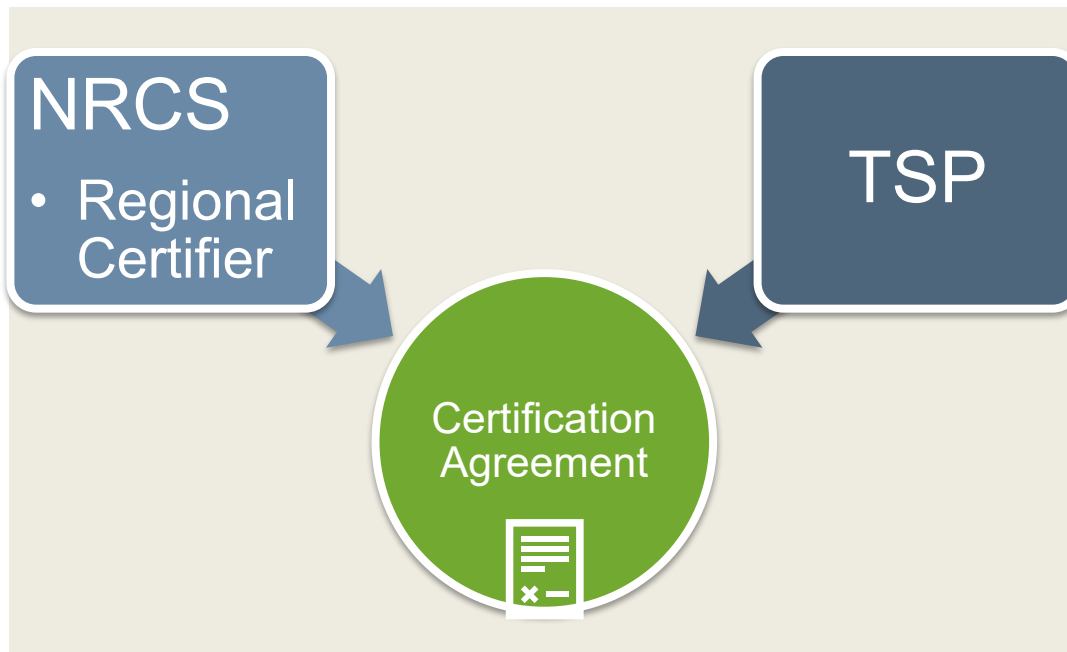


Step 6: Develop your TSP profile and Application in NRCS Registry

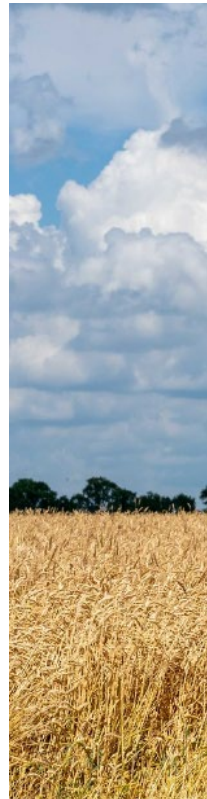
1. Complete your NRCS Registry **Profile Tabs**:
2. Start the **New TSP Application**
3. Select the **Practices** and/or **Activities** (technical services) and **locations** for your certification
4. Select a **Certification Option**: Certification, Education and Experience, or Experience.
5. Provide **qualifications** that demonstrate you meet the certification criteria within the certification option you selected. Qualifications may include Education, Work Experience, Training, Licenses/Certifications, and Sample Plans or Designs.
6. Review your application and profile information.
7. Review the **TSP Certification Agreement** terms and conditions.
8. **Digitally sign** your application and submit it for NRCS review.



Certification Agreement



- The Certification Agreement specifies the terms and conditions of the certification.
- The TSP acknowledges that failing to meet these requirements may result in ineligibility to receive payments or in decertification.
- Certification agreements may not exceed 3 years.



TSP Certification Process

Regional Coordinator reviews for completeness and national criteria

State Conservationist (and staff) reviews for state-level criteria and work sample

Regional Certifier makes a determination to certify or defer each technical service

Certification Agreement

Place TSP on the list and make available to the public

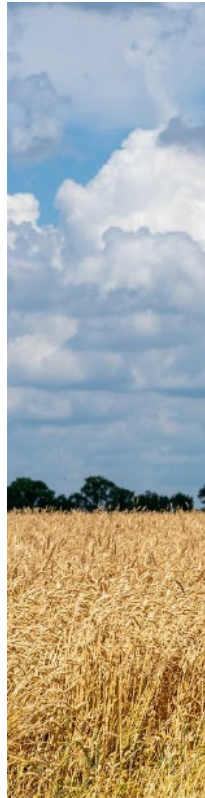
60 days

Policy statement

- New certification applications may not exceed 10 states. Subsequent modification applications may add states.

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Technical Service Provider Program

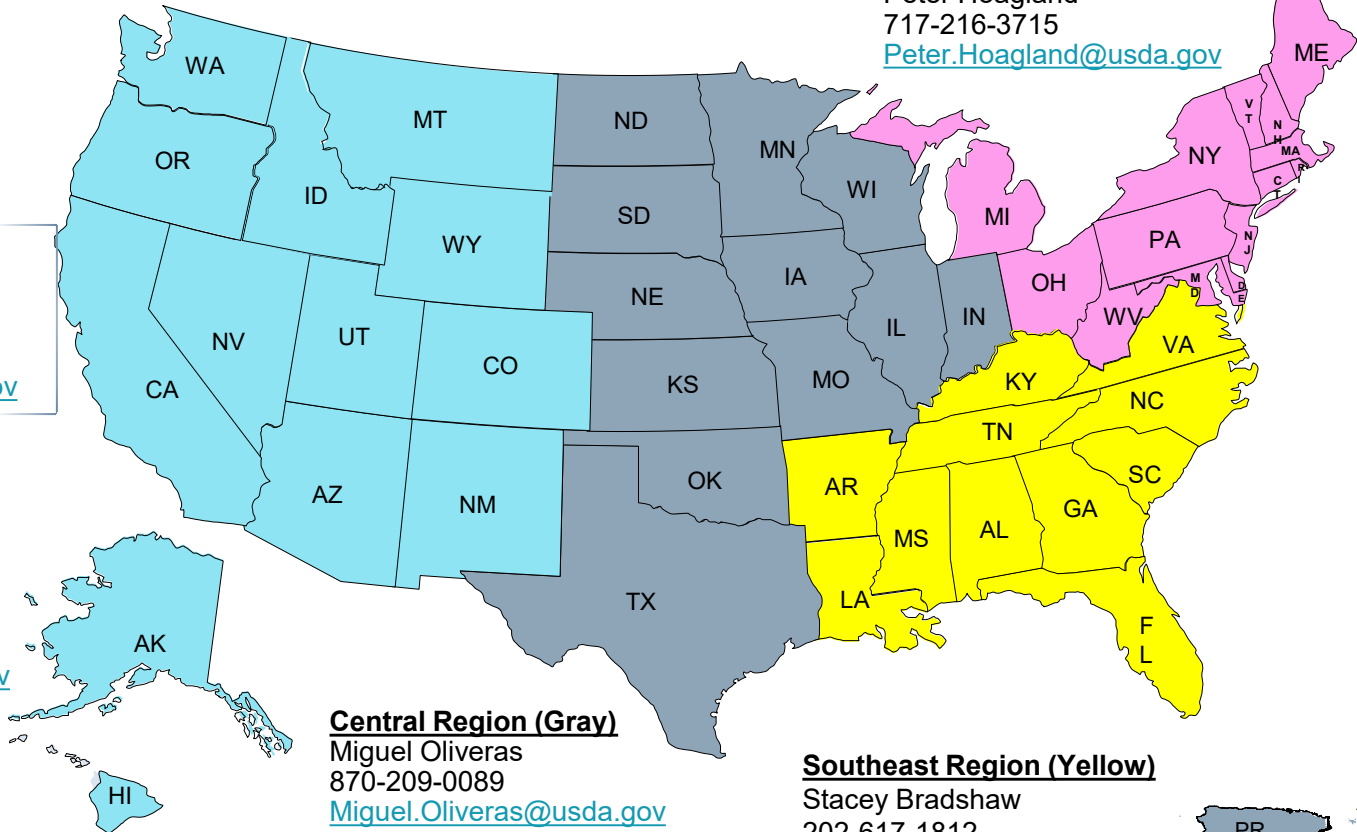
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