

# Submit New Request

## Requester Details

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Requester Default Category: Educational Institution

## General Request Information

Select a USDA Component	Farm Service Agency (FSA)
USDA Component Details	The Farm Service Agency (FSA) implements agricultural policy, administers credit and loan programs, and manages conservation, commodity, disaster and farm marketing programs through a national network of offices.
Request Type	FOIA
Requester Category	Educational Institution
Delivery Method of Response	PAL

## Mailing Address

Address1	32 Campus Drive
Address2	
City	Missoula
State	Montana
State (Other)	
Country	United States
Zip Code	59812

## Description of Records Request

I am requesting official geospatial county boundaries — in a geospatial file format such as an ESRI ShapeFile, GeoJSON, or similar — that were used to determine eligibility for the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) for each program year (2008–2025).

Each week, eligibility for the LFP is determined for each county in the United States. Federal law and FSA guidance describes a process by which county-level eligibility is determined by the intersection of county boundaries, the United States Drought Monitor weekly drought assessment, and the normal grazing period for each type of grazing land in each county. I have previously submitted and received FOIA requests for LFP Normal Grazing Periods (2025-FSA-04691-F) and county/grazing land eligibility data (2025-FSA-04690-F) and have a pending FOIA request for more complete LFP eligibility data (2025-FSA-08422-F).

County boundaries change, both substantially as counties and county equivalents are created and removed as well as in small ways as legal boundaries between counties are refined. For instance, the US Census has recorded 472 county boundary corrections or changes from 2008 through 2024. Thus, agencies that make regulatory actions that implicate county boundaries (such as LFP eligibility determination) must maintain records of which boundaries were used for such determinations. LFP eligibility determinations stipulate that if “any area of the county” falls within certain drought classes during a type of crop’s normal grazing period eligibility is triggered. County boundary definitions are essential to the administration of the LFP.

FSA Guidance document 1-LFP Amendment 6, Paragraph 23A states grazing losses for the covered livestock must occur on land that is:

- physically located in a county that is, during the normal grazing period for the specific type of grazing land or pastureland for the county, rated by the U.S. Drought Monitor as having any of the following:
- D2 (severe drought) intensity in any area of the county for at least 8 consecutive weeks during the normal grazing period for the specific type of grazing land or pastureland for the county
- D3 (extreme drought) intensity in any area of the county at any time during the normal grazing period for the specific type of grazing land or pastureland for the county
- D3 (extreme drought) intensity in any area of the county for:
- at least 4 weeks during the normal grazing period (nonconsecutive weeks) for the specific type of grazing land or pastureland for the county
- or is rated as having a D4 (exceptional drought) intensity in any area of the county at any time during the normal grazing period for the specific grazing land or pastureland for the county
- D4 (exceptional drought) intensity in any area of the county for at least 4 weeks during the normal grazing period (nonconsecutive weeks) for the specific type of grazing land or pastureland for the county.

Thank you for your consideration.

01/01/2008

07/15/2025

Enter a detailed description

Date Range for Record Search:From  
Date Range for Record Search:To  
Description Document

Fee Waiver Requests

Amount Willing to Pay	\$25
Check to Request a Fee Waiver	Yes
Reason for Waiver Request	The University of Montana is an institution of higher education, and this request is for academic research purposes. The disclosure of the requested information is in the public interest as a means of quantifying discrepancies between county eligibility and FSA program subscription, ultimately to improve administration of FSA programs and enhance the security of the Nation’s food system. The disclosure of the information is not primarily in the commercial interest of myself or the University of Montana.

Expedite Information

Request Expedited Processing	No
Reason for Expedite Request	