

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS



Department of Agricultural Resources

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www.mass.gov/agr



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2023 ORGANIC CERTIFICATION COST-SHARE PROGRAM

To: Massachusetts Certified Organic Farms
From: Keri Cornman, Grants and Procurement Manager
Subject: 75% Reimbursement for Organic Certification
Date: October 18, 2023 – REVISED for updated December 15, 2023 deadline

We are pleased to announce that the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources is authorized by the USDA – Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) to reimburse certified Organic Crop and Livestock Producers and Handlers (processors) for the Federal 2023 Fiscal Year. **Reimbursements are limited to 75% (seventy-five percent) of an operation's certification costs, up to a maximum of \$750 (seven hundred fifty dollars) of certification, for the program year.** Organic operations certified for crops, wild crops, livestock and handlers are eligible to participate. These categories are defined as follows:

Crops: Pastures, cover crops, green manure crops, catch crops, or any plant or part of a plant intended to be marketed as an agricultural product, fed to livestock, or used in the field to manage nutrients and soil fertility,
Wild Crops: Any plant or option of a plant that is collected or harvested from a site that is not maintained under cultivation, and;

Livestock: Any cattle, sheep, goats, swine, poultry, or equine animals used for food or in the production of food, fiber, feed, or other agricultural-based consumer products; wild or domesticated game; or other non-plant life, except such term shall not include aquatic animals for the production of food, fiber, feed, or other agricultural-based consumer products.

Handler (processor): Any operation engaged in the business of selling, processing or packaging agricultural products except for final retailers that do not process agricultural products.

Operations may receive one (1) reimbursement per certificate or category of certification (if one certificate includes multiple categories). For example, if an operation is certified for the crops category only, it is eligible for up to 75% of certification costs up to a maximum of \$750.00. If an operation is certified for crops and livestock, it is eligible for up to 75% of the certification costs for two of these categories for a total of \$1,500.00. If an operation is certified for crops, wild crops and livestock, it is eligible for up to 75% of certification costs for three of these categories for a total of \$2,250.00. If an operation is certified for crops, wild crops, livestock and handler, it is eligible for up to 75% of certification costs for all four categories for a total of \$3,000.00.

Applicants must successfully receive their first organic certification from a USDA accredited certifying agent or have incurred expenses related to the renewal of certification between October 1, 2022 and September 30, 2023, thus the 2022 and 2023 Federal Fiscal Years.

Please be advised that complete applications will take precedence over incomplete applications. Incomplete applications will be returned with a memo outlining the required documentation. Complete applications will be processed on a first come, first serve basis until all funds are expended. **In order to receive reimbursement, please complete all enclosed forms by no later than December 15, 2023. Incomplete forms will not be processed for payment by the Department. No exceptions.**

Instructions

1. Please complete the form below entitled “Reimbursement Form”.
2. Attached copies of the organic cost share certification and proof of certification payment (i.e., receipt of cancelled check).
3. The date of the organic cost share certification is crucial in determining eligibility. The certification must occur between October 1, 2022 and September 30, 2023. The proof of payment does not always fall within the period being certified.
4. **If you did not receive reimbursement in 2022 or prior, and /or if there are any changes to the information, complete the W-9 Form.** You will need to submit a letter explaining any changes along with an updated W-9 form. When completing the W-9 form be sure that the “Legal” name of the vendor is on the first line of the form. SSN# = Vendor name (individual name) i.e., John Smith. Federal Employer ID# = (Individual name as sole proprietor (i.e., John Smith or Company name wherever (i.e. Smith Farm Inc. is applicable) see instructions on the W9 form. Please note, faxed forms shall not be accepted, nor shall any W-9 forms that have erasure marks or have been whited-out.
5. Attach a copy of your IRS tax identification (TIN) number along with the W9 attachment. Read and understand the Commonwealth Terms and Conditions form. Please note, faxed forms will not be accepted, nor shall any W-9 forms that have erasure marks or have been whited-out.
6. The “Authorization for Electronics-funds Payment” form is attached. **This form is mandatory.** Please note, faxed forms will not be accepted, nor shall any W-9 forms that have erasure marks or have been whited-out.
7. All forms noted above in #4 and #5 must be signed by owner (if sole proprietor) or authorized signatory (if corporation, or other organization).
8. **Mail or email completed forms to the following address, no later than December 15, 2023,** and submit them to:

Keri Cornman
Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources
100 Cambridge Street, Ste 900
Boston, MA 02114

PLEASE NOTE THE MAILING ADDRESS HAS CHANGED FOR 2023 – DO NOT SEND TO CAUSEWAY STREET. SEND TO ADDRESS LISTED ABOVE.

If emailing your application, all forms must be included within the email. **Please utilize Adobe Signature and return the entire file OR Print, Scan, and Email just the completed forms to**
Email: Keri.Cornman@mass.gov

For more information or questions, please contact Keri Cornman at email: keri.cornman@mass.gov.

2023 REIMBURSEMENT FORM

YOU MUST FILL OUT CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact Name:

Farm Business Name:

Address:

Phone Number:

Fax Number:

Email Address:

Tax ID# or SS# (Must be the same number as recorded on W-9 Form):

Service Dates	Certification Category: Crops, Wild Crops, Livestock or Handler. List category of certification (s) below.	Accredited Certifying Agent (s) (Name and Address)	Service Cost(s)
		TOTAL SERVICE COSTS:	
		75% of TOTAL (Total x 0.75) OR MAXIMUM \$750 per certificate	

ATTESTATION I, _____ hereby certify upon pains and penalties of perjury

(Please PRINT name)

that the information on this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I have read and understood the Commonwealth Terms and Conditions.

Signed this _____ day of _____, 2023
(Please SIGN Name)

Please mail or email completed forms to the following address, no later than December 15, 2023 to:

Keri Cornman, Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, 100 Cambridge Street, Ste. 900,
Boston, MA 02114.

If emailing your application, all forms must be included within the email. **Please utilize Adobe Signature and attach the entire file OR Print, Scan, and Email just the completed forms to**
Keri.Cornman@mass.gov