

The logo features a stylized black silhouette of a house with a chimney on the left side, representing a farm.

VET-2-FARM ACT OF 2018

VETERAN EMPOWERMENT AND TRAINING TO FACILITATE AGRICULTURAL REVITALIZATION AND MOBILIZATION ACT

To keep our agricultural economy strong and ensure that we can feed our growing population, we need to make a greater investment in our next generation of veteran farmers. Service members departing active service and veterans are an under-tapped population, and the Vet-2-FARM Act will ensure that all new veterans are eligible for support from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The bill also enables community partners and business to work with veterans interested in agriculture, makes risk management tools like crop insurance more affordable, expands access to land and capital, and prioritizes training and education opportunities for veterans.

Specifically, this legislation:

Provides veterans with easy access to information about available jobs in agriculture by coordinating between several agencies

- Requires the USDA to provide information to veterans about positions within the USDA that are available to employ or train vets
- Requires the USDA to consult with the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of Labor, and the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to help veterans find work in the agriculture field

Makes information about apprenticeships, job training, education, and CSP available to veterans through a USDA website

Requests that the USDA provide a report on veterans employed in agriculture

- Report will include the agricultural jobs or apprenticeships available to service members and veterans as well as the outreach and other efforts USDA has made to disseminate that information

Streamlines eligibility requirements to allow all new veterans to benefit from support

- Clarifies the term farmer veteran to expand support to all new veterans, including those who have existing experience in agriculture, in addition to those starting a new career on the farm

Makes risk management tools more affordable and accessible for farmer veterans

- Crop Insurance: Waives administrative fees for catastrophic risk protection, guarantees veterans receive a higher premium subsidy, and allows yield flexibility
- Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP): Eliminates service fees and reduces premiums for additional coverage

- Emergency Livestock Assistance Program (ELAP): Covers 90% of losses due to disease or natural disaster for veterans who produce livestock, honeybees, or farm raised fish

Improves access to loans and land for veterans starting and expanding their farms

- Down Payment Loans: Allows veterans to be eligible for loans to cover down payments on land when purchasing real estate
- Interest Rate Reduction Program: Prioritizes veterans to receive reduced interest rates on guaranteed loans through the Farm Service Agency
- Conservation Reserve Program Transfer Incentive Program: Facilitates the transfer of Conservation Reserve Program land from retiring farmers and ranchers to veteran farmers

Prioritizes veteran farmers in training and education programs to help them start and expand their businesses

- Food Safety Outreach Program: Gives grant funding priority to projects designed to help veteran farmers meet food safety standards
- Federal Crop Insurance Education: Adds a special emphasis on veteran farmers to help them navigate their crop insurance options so they can best protect their assets