

USDA Updates Available Functions During Lapse in Funding

Release & Contact Info

Press Release

Release No. 0285.18

Contact: USDA Press

Email: press@oc.usda.gov

(Washington, D.C., December 28, 2018) – The U.S. Department of Agriculture today updated its assessment of how the lapse in federal funding will affect services and programs should the government shutdown remain unresolved beyond December 31, 2018. Many services will carry on, while others will discontinue on January 1, 2019 because available funds have been expended.

Certain USDA activities would remain active because they are related to law enforcement, the protection of life and property, or are financed through available funding (such as through mandatory appropriations, multi-year discretionary funding, or user fees). During the first week of the shutdown, 62% of employees have been either exempted or excepted from shutdown activities. If the shutdown continues, this percentage would decrease, and activities would be reduced as available funding decreases.

USDA activities that **will continue** beyond January 1, 2019 include:

- Meat, poultry, and processed egg inspection services.
- Grain and other commodity inspection, weighing, grading, and IT support services funded by user fees.
- Inspections for import and export activities to prevent the introduction and dissemination of pests into and out of the U.S., including inspections from Hawaii and Puerto Rico to the mainland.
- Forest Service law enforcement, emergency and natural disaster response, and national defense preparedness efforts.
- Continuity and maintenance of some research measurements and research-related infrastructure, such as germplasm, seed storage, and greenhouses.
- Care for animals, plants, and associated infrastructure to preserve agricultural research and to comply with the Wild Horses and Burros statute.
- Eligible households will still receive monthly Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits for January.
- Most other domestic nutrition assistance programs, such as the Commodity Supplemental Food Program, WIC, and the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations, can

continue to operate at the State and local level with any funding and commodity resources that remain available. Additional Federal funds will not be provided during the period of the lapse, however deliveries of already-purchased commodities will continue.

- The Child Nutrition (CN) Programs, including School Lunch, School Breakfast, Child and Adult Care Feeding, Summer Food Service and Special Milk will continue operations into February. Meal providers are paid on a reimbursement basis 30 days after the end of the service month.
- Minimal administrative and management support, including to excepted IT systems and contracts, will be maintained to support the above activities.
- Natural Resources Conservation Service offices will remain open to support conservation technical and financial assistance (such as Environmental Quality Incentives Program and easement programs).
- Market Facilitation Program payments for producers that have already certified production with the Farm Service Agency.
- Trade mitigation purchases made by USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service.
- Agricultural export credit and other agricultural trade development and monitoring activities.
- USDA's Market News Service, which provides market information to the agricultural industry.

USDA activities which **would not be continued** include:

- USDA Farm Service Agency county offices will close at the end of business on Friday, December 28, 2018.
- Provision of new rural development loans and grants for housing, community facilities, utilities and businesses.
- Recreation sites across the U.S. National Forest System, unless they are operated by external parties under a recreational special use permit, will be closed. While technically closed, many will still be physically accessible to visitors at their own risk, but without staffing at ranger stations and without access to facilities such as public restrooms.
- New timber sales.
- Most forest fuels reduction activities in and around communities.
- NASS statistics, World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates report, and other agricultural economic and statistical reports and projections.
- Assistance for the control of some plant and animal pests and diseases unless funded by cooperators or other non-appropriated sources.
- Research facilities except for the care for animals, plants and associated infrastructure to preserve agricultural research.
- Provision of new grants or processing of payments for existing grants to support research, education, and extension.

- ERS Commodity Outlook Reports, Data Products, research reports, staff analysis, and projections. The ERS public website would be taken offline.
- Most departmental management, administrative and oversight functions, including civil rights, human resources, financial management, audit, investigative, legal and information technology activities.
- Mandatory Audits (Financial Statements, FISMA, and potentially Improper Payments) will be suspended and may not be completed and released on the date mandated by law.

For more information, please view [a summary of USDA's shutdown plans](#) (PDF, 75.2 KB).

In addition, you may view [a list of shutdown plans by USDA agency and office](#). Note that the National Finance Center information can be found on pages 7 to 9 of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) document on that page.