

## **Myths and FACTS for New Farmers**

**Myth: The government is providing money to families who would like to start farms.**

**FACT:** The government may provide direct loans to eligible new farmers. Grants are not available. Almost every penny spent to get a farm going comes from personal resources. Some farms are eligible for cost-share programs, depending on the rules in the current Farm Bill. It depends on the purpose for which the money will be spent. These programs are very specific and usually require detailed recordkeeping, contracts, and a certain level of personal investment before payments start.

**Myth: Everything about agriculture is known by now.**

**FACT:** There is a lot we do not know about cultivating the land, water supply, and air to grow crops and raise livestock. Many new farmers are coming up with their own ideas for agriculture, sustainable practices, value-added products, and new markets. You have the right to be as creative a farmer as you can possibly be.

**Myth: Farming is not much of a career.**

**FACT:** Farmers are held in high regard by other farmers, and local professionals. You might also have a non-farm career and be interested in farming as an additional source of income. Farming can be a stimulating way to put your additional energies to work on your land, or land you borrow or lease. If you do not have much energy left after your day job, farming might not be for you.

**Myth: Farming will earn us some extra money.**

**FACT:** You do not make money growing crops or tending livestock. You make money selling crops or livestock. How much money you make depends equally on how effective you are at marketing your farm products. Products of high quality are consistently in demand. For certain people, farming is simply a good way of life, and the money is unimportant.

**Myth: Organic farming is easy and a better idea because people pay more and you don't spray anything.**

**Fact:** Organic farming is very risky and labor-intensive with little room for error. Organic farms may use approved chemicals and pesticides, just like conventional farms. To compensate organic farmers for this hard work and higher risk, consumers are usually willing to pay more for organic food. They are required to have a detailed crop plan and meticulous records to be certified as an organic farm. For more information on organic farming visit [www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/nop).