

Underserved definition for IAMP – based on USDA definition

Underserved status includes **beginning farmers and ranchers** with 10 or fewer years of experience, either independently or in partnership; **socially disadvantaged farmers** who face racial or ethnic prejudices, including Black or African Descent, Hispanic, Asian or Asian Descent, Pacific Islander, Native American or Alaskan Native group members; **farmers and ranchers who are veterans** (as defined by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs); **limited resource farmers** with annual sales below \$100,000; and **women farmers and producers**. This status also acknowledges the evolving structure of farm operations, where multiple individuals, including family members and partners, may share in decision-making and operational responsibilities, reflecting the collaborative nature of modern farming.

We emphasize the importance of **self-identification** for individuals in defining their roles within agriculture, recognizing that personal and operational identities may not always align with traditional or bureaucratic classifications. This is especially relevant to **individuals that may not typically apply the label “farmer” to themselves despite being closely involved with farm operations.**

Primary operators are individuals who play a significant role in the agricultural production process, regardless of their ownership stake in the farm. This definition includes individuals who contribute substantially to the farm's operations, decision-making, and labor. Specifically, primary operators may:

1. **Participate in Daily Operations:** Engage in the daily management and physical tasks necessary for the farm's productivity, such as planting, harvesting, feeding livestock, and maintaining equipment.
2. **Make Strategic Decisions:** Be actively involved in strategic planning and decision-making processes related to crop selection, resource allocation, marketing, and sales.
3. **Provide Labor and Expertise:** Contribute their labor and specialized knowledge in areas such as soil management, animal husbandry, financial management, and the implementation of sustainable farming practices.
4. **Influence Farm Policy and Practices:** Have a substantial influence on farm policies, practices, and overall direction, even if they do not hold the majority ownership stake.
5. **Collaborate and Innovate:** Work collaboratively with other farm stakeholders, including family members, employees, and external partners, to innovate and improve farm operations.

We acknowledge the challenges in accurately identifying and categorizing producers due to evolving data collection methods and commit to continuously refining our understanding and support for these groups as data collection practices improve. Our definition aims to be inclusive and adaptable, ensuring that all individuals who contribute to the agricultural sector are recognized and supported.