

265—44.6(16) Beginning farmer tax credit program.**44.6(1) Eligibility.**

a. Eligible taxpayer. A taxpayer is eligible to participate in the beginning farmer tax credit program if the taxpayer meets all of the following requirements:

(1) The taxpayer is a person who may acquire or otherwise obtain or lease agricultural land in this state pursuant to Iowa Code chapter 9H or 9I. However, the taxpayer must not be a person who may acquire or otherwise obtain or lease agricultural land exclusively because of an exception provided in one of those chapters or in a provision of another chapter of the Iowa Code, including but not limited to Iowa Code chapter 10, 10D, or 501 or section 15E.207.

(2) The taxpayer has entered into an agricultural lease agreement with a qualified beginning farmer to lease agricultural land as provided in 2019 Iowa Acts, House File 768, section 9.

(3) The taxpayer has not been at fault for terminating a prior agreement under the program or another agreement in which the taxpayer was allowed to claim a tax credit under Iowa Code section 175.37 as it existed prior to January 1, 2015, or Iowa Code section 16.80 as it existed prior to January 1, 2018.

(4) If the agreement includes the lease of a confinement feeding operation structure as defined in Iowa Code section 459.102, the taxpayer is not a party to a pending administrative or judicial action, including a contested case proceeding under Iowa Code chapter 17A, relating to an alleged violation involving an animal feeding operation as regulated by the department of natural resources, regardless of whether the pending action is brought by the department or the attorney general.

(5) The taxpayer is not a partner of a partnership, shareholder of a family farm corporation, or member of a family farm limited liability company that is the lessee of an agricultural asset that is part of an agricultural lease agreement. If a beginning farmer has an ownership interest in the agricultural asset that does not exceed 10 percent, the tax credit award is reduced by an amount equivalent to the beginning farmer's ownership percentage. For example, if a beginning farmer owns 9 percent of an agricultural asset that is the subject of the agricultural lease agreement, the tax credit award is reduced by 9 percent.

b. Qualified beginning farmer. A beginning farmer must meet all of the following criteria to be eligible for participation in the beginning farmer tax credit program:

(1) Is a resident of the state. If the beginning farmer is a partnership, all partners must be residents of the state. If the beginning farmer is a family farm corporation, all shareholders must be residents of the state. If the beginning farmer is a family farm limited liability company, all members must be residents of the state.

(2) Has sufficient education, training, or experience in farming. If the beginning farmer is a partnership, at least one partner who is not a minor must have sufficient education, training, or experience in farming. If the beginning farmer is a family farm corporation, at least one shareholder who is not a minor must have sufficient education, training, or experience in farming. If the beginning farmer is a family farm limited liability company, at least one member who is not a minor must have sufficient education, training, or experience in farming.

(3) Has access to adequate working capital and production items.

(4) Will materially and substantially participate in farming. If the beginning farmer is a partnership, family farm corporation, or family farm limited liability company, at least one of the partners, shareholders, or members who is not a minor must materially and substantially participate in farming.

(5) Does not own more than 10 percent ownership interest in an agricultural asset included in the agreement.

(6) Is of majority age pursuant to Iowa Code section 599.1 and is legally able to enter into a contract.

44.6(2) General provisions.

a. A beginning farmer tax credit is allowed only for agricultural assets that are subject to an agricultural lease agreement entered into by an eligible taxpayer and a qualifying beginning farmer participating in the beginning farmer tax credit program established pursuant to Iowa Code section 16.78. The tax credit is allowed regardless of whether the principal agricultural asset is soil, pasture, or a building or other structure used in farming.

b. A tax credit in excess of the eligible taxpayer's tax liability for the tax year is not refundable but may be credited to the tax liability for a period set forth in Iowa Code section 16.82, if unused in the tax year the credits are earned. A tax credit shall not be carried back to a tax year prior to the tax year in which the eligible taxpayer redeems the tax credit. The term of the credit shall begin in the crop year in which the IAD board approves the award. The maximum term of the credit shall not exceed the term of the agricultural lease agreement.

44.6(3) Application.

a. The authority shall prepare and make available appropriate forms to be used in making application for the tax credit, including forms for both the taxpayer and the qualified beginning farmer.

b. Each application shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

(1) Taxpayer information: name, address, and social security number or tax identification number. The taxpayer shall also indicate the length of the lease, the type of lease, and the location of the agricultural asset to be leased.

(2) Qualified beginning farmer information: name and address. In addition, the application shall have attached to it a copy of the qualified beginning farmer's current financial statement (generally prepared one month preceding application submission). The application will also include a background letter on the qualified beginning farmer documenting to the satisfaction of the authority that the beginning farmer has sufficient education, training, or experience in farming and has access to adequate working capital and production items. This letter may be submitted by one or more of the following: the qualified beginning farmer, the taxpayer or another third party.

(3) A copy of the agricultural lease agreement that conforms to the requirements set forth in subrule 44.6(4).

c. Complete applications shall be processed in the order they are received by the authority.

d. Authority staff will review applications for completeness and eligibility and make recommendations to the IAD board. The IAD board will review applications and recommendations from authority staff and make recommendations to the authority. Upon review of the recommendations of the IAD board, the authority will approve, defer, or deny each application.

e. Any applicant wishing to appeal a decision of the IAD board can appeal directly to the IAD board.

f. Upon submission of the application or a request to amend an agricultural lease agreement, the authority shall collect the application fee. The authority shall collect fees in the amounts based upon the acreage of the land that is the subject of the agreement and the length of the lease, as indicated in the chart below.

Application Fees Chart

Length of Lease in Years				
Leased Acres	2	3	4	5
100 or fewer	\$300	\$350	\$400	\$450
101 to 250	\$400	\$450	\$500	\$550
251 or more	\$500	\$550	\$600	\$650

g. For any amendment to a previously approved agricultural lease agreement, an amendment fee of \$100 shall be paid at the time the amendment is submitted.

44.6(4) Requirements of an agricultural lease agreement.

a. The agricultural lease agreement must meet the following requirements:

(1) The agreement must include the lease of agricultural land located in this state or agricultural improvements located in this state and may provide for the rental of agricultural equipment as defined in Iowa Code section 322F.1.

(2) The agreement must include provisions which describe the consideration paid for the agreement in a manner that allows the authority to calculate the value of the lease in order to determine the tax credit amount as provided in Iowa Code section 16.82.

(3) The agreement must be in writing and signed by all parties.

(4) The agreement must be for at least two years, but not more than five years. The agreement may be renewed any number of times by the eligible taxpayer and qualified beginning farmer for a term of at least two years, but not more than five years. At the end of the approved agricultural lease agreement term, a new application must be submitted to the authority. However, an eligible taxpayer shall not participate in the program for more than 15 years. For the purposes of this subparagraph, an eligible taxpayer first participating in the beginning farmer tax credit program on or after January 1, 2019, as provided in 2019 Iowa Acts, chapter 161, for a tax year beginning on or after that date, may also participate in the program for not more than 15 years.

(5) The agreement shall not include a lease or rental of equipment intended as a security.

b. An eligible taxpayer may apply and be approved to enter into agreements with different qualified beginning farmers.

c. The agreement cannot be assigned, and the agricultural land subject to the agreement shall not be subleased.

d. The agricultural assets shall not be leased or rented at a rate that is substantially higher than the market rate for similar agricultural assets leased or rented within the same community. As used in this paragraph, when referring to an agricultural asset that is cropland, “substantially higher” means not more than 30 percent above the average cash rent paid for cropland rented in the same county according to the most recent cash rent survey for cropland published by a unit of Iowa State University of Science and Technology recognized by the authority.

44.6(5) Changes to an agricultural lease agreement.

a. The underlying lease for agricultural land may only be amended without submitting a new application if any of the following apply:

(1) The terms of the amended lease are more favorable to the qualified beginning farmer, including but not limited to the rent payment being reduced.

(2) A party has changed their name.

(3) The owner of an agricultural asset is changed to the owner’s estate or trust upon the eligible taxpayer’s death.

b. If the eligible taxpayer and the qualified beginning farmer are amending an agricultural lease agreement but none of the conditions of paragraph 44.6(5) “a” apply, then the eligible taxpayer must submit a new application for a tax credit.

c. If an amendment to an agreement changes the total amount that will be paid to the eligible taxpayer under the agreement, the eligible taxpayer shall notify the authority in a manner and form prescribed by the authority within 30 days of the date the amendment is executed by the parties.

(1) If the amendment will reduce the total amount paid to the eligible taxpayer under the agreement, the authority shall recalculate and reduce the eligible taxpayer’s tax credit award under 2019 Iowa Acts, House File 768, section 12.

(2) If the amendment will increase the total amount paid to the eligible taxpayer under the agreement, the tax credit award shall not be increased unless the eligible taxpayer submits an amended application to the authority on the relevant form available on the authority’s website and that meets the requirements of 2019 Iowa Acts, House File 768, section 10. If the amended application is approved under 2019 Iowa Acts, House File 768, section 10, the authority may increase the amount of the tax credit award. The increased amount of the tax credit award shall be subject to the aggregate award limitation in 2019 Iowa Acts, House File 768, section 12, for the calendar year in which the increased award is made.

d. Paragraph 44.6(5) “c” does not apply to an amendment to an agreement that requires a new application under paragraph 44.6(5) “b” in order to be valid.

e. An eligible taxpayer or qualified beginning farmer may terminate an agreement as provided in the agreement or by law. The eligible taxpayer must notify the authority of the termination within 30 days of the date of termination in the manner and form prescribed by the authority.

f. Expiration of lease. Prior to the expiration of the lease, the qualified beginning farmer will continue to be eligible for the term of the lease. Upon expiration of the lease, both the taxpayer and qualified beginning farmer must reapply to continue the tax credit.

44.6(6) Procedure for calculating tax credit awards.

a. The amount of the tax credit for a cash rent agreement equals 5 percent of the amount of rent received for each year.

b. For a commodity share agreement, the amount of the tax credit shall equal 15 percent of the gross amount that the eligible taxpayer would receive as a rent payment from the sale of the eligible taxpayer's share of the crop in each harvest year.

c. To calculate the credit for a commodity share agreement, the authority will use the following assumptions:

(1) Fifty percent of the leased land is allocated to corn and 50 percent of the leased land is allocated to soybeans, unless the lease specifies a different allocation of corn and soybeans. If the lease specifies a different allocation of corn and soybeans, then the leased land will be allocated proportionally, in accordance with the terms of the lease.

(2) For all years of the lease, the prices used for corn and soybeans will be the average prices for the last five years excluding the highest and lowest prices based on the USDA-NASS statewide data calculated at the time the application is approved.

(3) For all years of the lease, the commodity yields used for corn and soybeans will be the past ten-year average per-bushel yields for the same county where the leased land is located excluding the years of highest and lowest per-bushel yields based on the USDA-NASS data calculated at the time the application is approved.

(4) If the lease specifies a crop other than corn and soybeans, the relevant price and yield data from USDA-NASS for that crop will be used.

d. To calculate the credit for a commodity share agreement, the authority will use the following formula: $(1/2 \text{ acres leased multiplied by corn yield multiplied by corn price multiplied by percentage of owner's share multiplied by } .15) \text{ plus } (1/2 \text{ acres leased multiplied by soybean yield multiplied by soybean price multiplied by owner's share multiplied by } .15) = \text{the amount of the tax credit.}$ If the lease specifies a different allocation of corn and soybeans, then the leased acres will be in accordance with the terms of the lease.

e. The amount of the tax credit for a flex lease agreement equals the sum of the following amounts:

(1) The portion of the lease that is based on rent will be calculated as a cash rent agreement.

(2) The portion of the lease that is based on crop yield will be calculated as a commodity share agreement.

(3) If the flexible or bonus portion of the lease is based on crop production, the annual yield used to calculate the bonus will be the yield defined in subparagraph 44.6(6) "c"(3). If the annual yield is above the yield needed to trigger the bonus, the taxpayer will be awarded additional tax credits. The formula for calculating the tax credit will be yield above lease bonus trigger multiplied by price multiplied by percentage of owner's share multiplied by 0.15.

(4) For other factors used in a flex lease agreement, the relevant data used will be the past ten-year average per-bushel yield for the same county where the leased land is located excluding the highest and lowest years based on the USDA-NASS data.

f. The amount of the tax credit shall be reduced by the percent ownership interest of the qualifying beginning farmer in the agricultural asset.

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