



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

**USDA CONSULTATION & LISTENING SESSION ON TECHNICAL GUIDELINES FOR CLIMATE-SMART
AGRICULTURE CROPS USED AS BIOFUEL FEEDSTOCKS**

SEPTEMBER 03, 2025

FRAMING PAPER:
TECHNICAL GUIDELINES FOR CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE CROPS USED
AS BIOFUEL FEEDSTOCKS

Virtual Consultation

Registration: [Click to register](#)

AGENDA:

3-5 pm ET

**TRIBAL CONSULTATION & LISTENING SESSION: TECHNICAL GUIDELINES FOR
CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE CROPS USED AS BIOFUEL FEEDSTOCKS**

3:00-4:00 Consultation (Tribal government officials)

4:00-5:00* Listening Session (Open to Indian Country speakers)

**The Listening Session may begin before 4:00pm ET if the consultation ends before 4:00pm ET.*

Staff Office: *Office of the Chief Economist (OCE) - Office of Energy and Environmental Policy (OEEP)*

Introduction/Consulting Officials:

- Office of Energy and Environmental Policy (OEEP), Director, William Hohenstein
- Office of Energy and Environmental Policy (OEEP), Deputy Director, Kate Zook

USDA CONSULTATION & LISTENING SESSION ON TECHNICAL GUIDELINES FOR CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE CROPS USED AS BIOFUEL FEEDSTOCKS

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 03, 2025

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Background:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) published an interim final rule on Technical Guidelines for Climate-Smart Agriculture Crops Used as Biofuel Feedstocks on January 17th, 2025. The interim final rule establishes guidelines for quantifying, reporting, and verifying the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with the production of biofuel feedstock commodity crops grown in the United States. These guidelines could facilitate the recognition of climate-smart agriculture within clean transportation fuel policies, creating new market opportunities for biofuel feedstock producers.

Through this interim final rule, USDA is establishing voluntary standards that may be used to quantify, track, and report the impacts of these practices, such that clean fuel transportation policies could recognize the lower GHG emissions of biofuel feedstock crops grown with specific conservation practices.

The interim final rule applies to multiple entities along the biofuel supply chain including farmers; grain elevators; intermediary entities that purchase, process, or sell biofuel feedstock crops; and biofuel refiners. All guidelines established by the interim final rule are voluntary. They may inform the development of requirements for other programs which incentivize low-carbon biofuels.

The Interim Final Rule includes guidelines on the following:

1. Biofuel feedstock crops and entities in the biofuel supply chain;
2. Quantification of farm-level crop-specific carbon intensity;
3. Chain of custody standards for entities in the biofuel supply chain, including traceability and recordkeeping standards;
4. Auditing and verification standards; and
5. Climate-smart agriculture practice standards for the biofuel feedstock crops included under the rule.

Should entities, including farmers, voluntarily choose to follow the guidelines established in the interim final rule, they would be required to be audited by an independent third-party verifier. Farmers may be included in an audit of the entity that receives product directly from the farm (referred to as a “first point of aggregation” in the interim final rule). When farmers are included in the audit for a first point of aggregation, a sample of farmers supplying that entity are selected for the audit. Farmers may also elect to hire their own independent third-party verifier. USDA recognizes that access to farm auditors has proven to be a challenge in Indian country. This barrier to access would benefit from Tribal consultation to identify potential solutions for that barrier.

TRIBAL INPUT NEEDED:

- **Q1:** What recommendations would you provide to USDA to mitigate potential barriers to Tribes and Tribal members in accessing auditors?
- **Q2:** What additional barriers may prevent Tribes and Tribal members from adhering to the voluntary standards established in the interim final rule? How might USDA mitigate these barriers?
- **Q3:** Are there potential challenges Tribes and Tribal members may face in terms of market access to biofuel markets?
- **Q4:** Are there any additional biofuel feedstocks that would be particularly helpful to Tribes and Tribal members to add to this rule?
- **Q5:** Are there any additional practices that could lower the carbon intensity of the biofuel feedstock that should be added to this rule?

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Comments may also be submitted to the Office of Tribal Relations at Tribal.Relations@usda.gov.