

## BEGINNING FARMER INSTRUCTOR GUIDE

**Is my land managed as any of the following?**

- Farm/Ranch
- Forest (natural or planted)
- Conservation

*If yes, your land may qualify for one of the following programs:*

Question	Answer (Yes/No)	If Yes...	Name of Program	Explanation of Program	Funded (Yes/No /Maybe)	I want to find out more information ( <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> )
<b>Is my land considered to be working agriculture?</b>		Then my land <i>may</i> qualify for the Rural and Family Lands Protection Program →	<b>Florida Rural and Family Protection</b>	Florida Forever, the state conservation and recreation land acquisition program funding, which originally was \$300 million per year, has been reduced to zero for 2011. A portion of the Florida Forever funding was intended to be used to protect rural and working lands. Should funding become available, there is already a long list of approved projects for Florida Forever. Contact your legislators to encourage the funding of these programs.		
<b>Does my land produce a commodity food crop?</b> Do I have a local match of 50% (sources include water mgt. districts, counties or state funds) or 25% and an in-kind landowner contribution (donation of 25% of the value by the landowner)?		Then I <i>may</i> apply for a Farm and Ranchland Protection Program grant →	<b>USDA Farm &amp; Ranchland Protection</b>	A USDA/NRCS program with a state allocation of ~\$1.8 million per year, this program requires a local match (water management districts, counties, or state funds) of 50%. Half of the match may be raised through an in-kind contribution from a landowner. The program requires land to be dedicated to farming in perpetuity and currently producing a commodity food crop. These grants are competitive and the application window is from March to May each year.		

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<p><b>Is my land in a county with a land conservation program?</b></p>		<p>Then I <i>may</i> be able to apply for a county purchase program.</p>		<p>Alachua, Brevard, Broward, Charlotte, Duval, Flagler, Hillsborough, Indian River, Lake, Lee, Leon, Marion, Martin, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Orange, Palm Beach, Pinellas, Polk, Sarasota, Seminole, St. Lucie, and Volusia counties have programs. Contact your individual county for more information—many of these programs are currently unfunded. Your county may also be able to receive a donated conservation easement through a department responsible for land conservation. We will discuss this more in Unit 3.</p>		
<p><b>Is my land in a county with transfer of development rights programs or Rural Land Stewardship Act programs?</b></p>		<p>Then it <i>may</i> be possible to sell my development rights to a developer who wishes to increase density.</p>	<p><b>Transfer of Development Rights</b></p>	<p><b>Marion, Alachua, and St Lucie</b> counties have TDR programs. These programs enable landowners to transfer the development potential from one parcel of land to another, either on the same site or another site in a designated growth area, thereby shifting development from agricultural and environmentally sensitive areas to locations with full municipal services. Land located in the designated sending area may be able to receive payment by developers for transferring their development rights to designated receiving areas.</p>		
			<p><b>Rural Land Stewardship</b></p>	<p>The Rural Land Stewardship Act (RLSA) is an incentive-based system that uses the market economy to encourage preservation and private stewardship of natural resources, retain agriculture, and promote economic growth and diversification in a sustainable rural environment. <b>Collier, St. Lucie, Highlands, and Osceola</b> counties have some form of RLSA.</p>		

*Lesson:*

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<p><b>Is my land at amenable to carbon banking?</b> (Large, wooded acreage)</p>		<p>Then I <i>may</i> be able to sell <b>carbon credits</b> on my land.</p>	<p><b>Carbon Banking</b></p>	<p>AgraGate (<a href="http://www.agragate.com/default.aspx">http://www.agragate.com/default.aspx</a>) has no minimum acreage but is not currently accepting new enrollments. Blue Source (<a href="http://www.bluesource.com/">http://www.bluesource.com/</a>) requires a minimum acreage of 1500 acres to enroll in the carbon credit program. SunOne Solutions (<a href="http://www.sunonesolutions.com/">http://www.sunonesolutions.com/</a>) may be able to do smaller projects or aggregate properties.</p>		
<p><b>Do I have endangered species or land that is adapted to endangered species mitigation?</b></p>		<p>Then my land <i>may</i> be suitable for endangered species mitigation.</p>	<p><b>Endangered Species Mitigation</b></p>	<p><b>Gopher Tortoise Mitigation</b> “Incidental take permit” dollars from developers have been available through the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission since 2008 for gopher tortoises to be placed on private lands. In general, a conservation easement will be required for these lands that will have a conservation easement. Lands are required to be permitted to be “recipient sites.” Lands under existing conservation easements with compatible habitat may receive dollars per tortoise for recipient sites before a market is created for lands without current conservation easements. Typically donation of the conservation easement is encouraged followed by enrollment in this easement program. For more information see <a href="http://myfwc.com/license/wildlife/gopher-tortoise-permits/recipient-site/">http://myfwc.com/license/wildlife/gopher-tortoise-permits/recipient-site/</a></p> <p><b>Federally Endangered Species Mitigation (Scrub Jay, Sand Skink, Red Cockaded Woodpecker)</b> If land is surveyed to have compatible habitat or potential species on the Federally Endangered Species Mitigation list, landowners may be able to sell conservation easements through dollars from developers, which they pay to buy mitigation credits for destruction of the endangered species habitat.</p>		

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<b>Are my lands suitable for wetlands restoration?</b>		My land <i>may</i> be qualified to apply for a Wetlands Reserve Program grant or for selling wetland mitigation credits.	<b>USDA Wetlands Reserve Program</b>	<b>Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)</b> This USDA/NRCS program is a grant application that is open all year round. WRP offers technical and financial assistance to protect, restore and enhance wetlands on one's property. Landowners may voluntarily enroll in WRP through selling a permanent conservation easement; a 30-year term easement or entering a cost-share agreement. For more information go to: <a href="http://www.fl.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/flwrp.html">www.fl.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/flwrp.html</a>		
			<b>Wetlands Mitigation</b>	<b>Wetlands Mitigation</b> Landowners may participate in creating a wetlands mitigation bank with a developer or third party to protect, restore or enhance existing wetlands. The wetland must be managed as wetlands in perpetuity. For more information go to: <a href="http://www.dep.state.fl.us/water/wetlands/mitigation/synopsis.htm">http://www.dep.state.fl.us/water/wetlands/mitigation/synopsis.htm</a>		