

As of October 1, 2024, NRCS began offering financial assistance for implementation of Virtual Fencing (VF) through its EQIP program. Our understanding is that the first-round applications may be due by the end of November, with approved contracts funded in March 2025. Please confirm with your local NRCS/FSA office. This document is intended as a starting point for producers/graziers interested in VF to start conversations with their local NRCS agents, and with VF vendors. When possible, answers are provided in green. This document also includes a list of NRCS offices, VF vendor contacts and additional resources.

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USDA Offices and State NRCS Contacts Virtual Fence

Use [this link](#) to find your local USDA Service Center. USDA Service Centers are locations where you can connect with Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service, or Rural Development employees.

Use [this link](#) to find specific contacts at your state NRCS office.

Questions to discuss with NRCS agents

- How will the timing of financial assistance and the availability of collars be synched?
 - What happens if producers cannot get the equipment during their contract period?
 - Can a contract be revised to help pay for physical fencing infrastructure instead of VF in the case of low supply?
- Does NRCS provide VF financial assistance for brush management (314)? *If grazing animals are used to accomplish brush management, a 528 plan would still be necessary.*
- Is this assistance available nationally, or state dependent? *Each state office will be able to assert its own ranking, budgets, caps, and provide staff training.*
- Are VF payment scenarios based on acres or head of livestock? *The payments for VF will be per head of livestock, not per acre.*
- If I have a current contract for a 528 plan can I incorporate VF mid-contract. *No, you would need to apply for a new contract.*
- When are applications due? *NRCS accepts applications year-round but producers are encouraged to work with their NRCS representatives to incorporate VF into farm planning as soon as possible. In order to receive funding in 2025, applications need to be submitted by November 2024.*
- What % of producer costs will these scenarios cover?

United States Virtual Fence vendors

Gallagher, 1.800.531.5908

Halter, Theo Beaumont

No Fence, 650.514.6711, sales.us@nofence.no

Vence

Questions to discuss with Virtual Fence vendors

- Is VF right for my operation?
- Are collars, base stations and other equipment available now?
- Can I use VF to manage water access (allow or prevent animals from accessing water sources)?
- How much flexibility do I have to create perimeter shapes? Can a producer create a circular virtual pasture?
- How long do collars take to charge? Do you offer a multi-port charger to charge multiple collars at a time?
- Are there different size collars for young and fully grown animals?
- Do all animals have to wear collars or just a percentage?
- What species can collars be used on?
- How long does it take for the herd/flock to become trained to the virtual fence?
- How do animals know when to move to new pasture?
- What technical support do you provide? Technology support? Implementation support?
- Can multiple users access the app to manage the VF system?

Additional Resources

- Virtual Fencing 101 materials from Green Lands Blue Waters
These materials provide an introduction to virtual fencing for NRCS field staff, grazing educators and other conservation professionals. All of these materials are available for you to use for free. We encourage you to use them individually or as a group. The presentation was designed so that anyone can review and deliver it. The pre-recorded webinar provides an opportunity to see the presentation delivered by the authors to assist others in delivering to their audiences. The webinar recording can also be used as is, to be shared directly with an audience.
Fact Sheet – 1-page summary of virtual fencing basics; pdf format
Presentation – *Virtual Fence 101* presentation covering virtual fence technical basics, opportunities, challenges, vendors, costs, implementation considerations, and NRCS support; pdf format
Webinar – Recording of the *Virtual Fence 101* presentation delivered to a cohort of grazing specialists, state technical committee members and producers; includes a verbal Q&A section
- Virtual Fencing: Emerging Companies, Functionality and Benefits
- Virtual Fencing: A Climate Adaptation Strategy
- Researchers Explore Virtual Fencing as a Conservation Tool
- Virtual Fencing Technology for Cattle Management in the Pasture Feeding System - A Review
- 2024 Virtual Fencing 101: South Dakota State
- Beef Cattle Producer Perspectives on Virtual Fencing

