



United States Department of Agriculture

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

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District Conservationist





United States Department of Agriculture

NRCS Conservation Programs 2018 Farm Bill





United States Department of Agriculture



Financial Assistance Conservation Programs



EQIP



CSP



RCPP



**ACEP
ALE**



**ACEP
WRE**



United States Department of Agriculture



Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

EQIP offers financial and technical assistance to agriculture producers to promote agriculture production and environmental quality as compatible goals.



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EQIP Guidelines



- No minimum acreage size or amount of practice units.
- No caps to restrict participation against large or small operations.
- Average Non-Farm Adjusted Gross Income is less than \$900,000 for Conservation Programs.
- Payment limitation is \$450,000 for the current farm bill's life.
- No restrictions on the number of applications submitted by a participant.
- Payment method used will be the Payment Rate (PR) which reflects increases in agricultural input costs.
- Higher payment rate for historically underserved.



Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

- New program designed to be an all encompassing program focused project.
- Uses EQIP, CSP, ACEP-WRE and ACEP-ALE programs.
- Addresses a multitude of resource concerns.



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Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

- CSP pays farmers who are improving conservation treatment on their working lands.
- Encourages the continuation of practices that benefit soil, water and air resources.
- A person or legal entity cannot receive CSP payments exceeding \$200,000 during any five-year period.



ACEP – Agricultural Land Easement (ALE)

- **Helps landowners restore and protect grassland, including rangeland and pastureland, and certain other lands, while maintaining the areas as grazing lands.**
- **Program emphasis is on support for grazing operations, plant and animal biodiversity, and grasslands under the greatest threat of conversion.**
- **Enrollment options:**
 - **Permanent easements**



ACEP - Wetlands Reserve Easement (WRE)

A voluntary, non-regulatory, incentive-based program that helps private landowners, farmers and ranchers protect and restore wetlands on their property.

Enrollment options:

- Permanent easements**
- 30-year easements**
- 10 – year restoration agreement**



National Ranking Tool

Four evaluation categories contribute to the overall score:

1. Cost effectiveness
2. National priorities
3. State issues
4. Local issues

CONSERVATION PROGRAM APPLICATION

Name:	Application Number:
Address:	Application Date:
	County and State:
Email:	
Telephone:	Watershed:
	Subaccount:
Location (Legal Description or Farm and Tract Number):	

1. **Yes** **No** Do you have farm records established with the appropriate USDA Service Center Agency?

If no, you must establish them with the appropriate USDA Service Center Agency prior to submitting this application.

2. This is an application to participate in the:

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) <input type="checkbox"/> CSP Renewal	Agriculture Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) - Wetland Reserve Easements (WRE)
<input type="checkbox"/> Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) <input type="checkbox"/> EQIP <input type="checkbox"/> CSP	<input type="checkbox"/> Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) <input type="checkbox"/> ACEP- (WRE) <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy Forest Reserve Program (HFRP)

3. Are you applying to participate in a conservation program as an (check one of the following):

Individual

a) Please enter your legal name and tax identification number:

Name:

Tax Number:

Entity (Corporation, Limited Partnership, Trust, Estate, etc.)

a) Please enter entity legal name and tax identification number:

Name:

Tax Number:

b) **Yes** **No** Do you have appropriate documents including proof to sign for the entity?

Joint Operation (General Partnership, Joint Venture)

a) Please enter joint operation legal name and tax identification number:

Name:

Tax Number:

b) **Yes** **No** Do you have appropriate documents including proof to sign for the joint operation?

- 4. A Dun & Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and current registrations in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) System for Award Management (SAM) database are required for receiving payment under an Employer Identification Number (EIN). An EIN is also known as a Federal Tax Identification Number, and is used to identify a business entity.**

Please note that the entity-applicants must obtain a DUNS number, register it under the legal business name which matches the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) records for the applicable EIN, and such legal business name must match the name identified above as the applicant requesting participation in the named program. If your entity does not have a DUNS number, information is available at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform> To register with SAM, go to <https://www.sam.gov/>

DUNS Number:

Registration Activation Date:

- 5. Is the land being offered for enrollment used for crop (including forest-related) or livestock production?**

Crop Production

Crop Type:

Livestock Production

Livestock Type:

- 6. The land offered under this application is (check all that apply):**

Private Land

Public Land (Federal, State, or Local Government)

Tribal, Allotted, Ceded or Indian Land

- 7. You certify that Certification of control of the land offered under the application is evidenced by:**

Deed or other evidence of land ownership (required for all ACEP-WRE applications)

Written lease agreement

Years of control are through

Other agreement or legal conveyance (describe):

Years of control are through

- 8. Yes No Is the land offered under this application enrolled in any other conservation program?**

- 9. Do you meet the criteria for any of the following categories? (mark all that apply)**

Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher

Beginning Farmer or Rancher

Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher

Veteran Farmer or Rancher

Not Applicable

If you wish to apply in any of these categories, you must meet the self certification requirements. Definitions are provided below. For more information please go to this website:

<http://www.lrftool.sc.egov.usda.gov/>

Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher – The term “Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher” means a participant:

- With direct or indirect gross farm sales not more than the current indexed value in each of the previous two years, and
- Who has a total household income at or below the national poverty level for a family of four, or less than 50 percent of county median household income in each of the previous two years.



Beginning Farmer/Rancher

- Has not operated a farm or ranch or someone who has operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10 consecutive years. This requirement applies to all members of an entity.
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm or ranch.

Socially Disadvantaged Farmer/Rancher

- A member of a socially disadvantaged group whose members have been subjected to racial or ethnic prejudice because of their identity as members of the group without regard to their individual qualities.



Veteran Farmer/Rancher

- Has not operated a farm or ranch or someone who has operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10 consecutive years. This requirement applies to all members of an entity.
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm or ranch.
- Must be identified as a Beginning Farmer/Rancher
- A veteran farmer or rancher that is not considered a Beginning Farmer/Rancher does not meet the requirements of the Farm Bill designated “Veteran Farmer/Rancher.”

A legal entity or joint operation can be a Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher only if all individual members independently qualify. A Self-Determination Tool is available to the public and may be completed on-line or printed and completed hardcopy at: <http://www.lrftool.sc.egov.usda.gov/>

Beginning Farmer or Rancher– The term “Beginning Farmer or Rancher” means a participant who:

- Has not operated a farm or ranch, or who has operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10 consecutive years. This requirement applies to all members of a legal entity, and who
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm or ranch.

In the case of a contract with an individual, individually or with the immediate family, material and substantial participation requires that the individual provide substantial day-to-day labor and management of the farm or ranch, consistent with the practices in the county or State where the farm is located.

In the case of a contract made with a legal entity, all members must materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm or ranch. Material and substantial participation requires that the members provide some amount of the management, or labor and management necessary for day-to-day activities, such that if the members did not provide these inputs, operation of the farm or ranch would be seriously impaired.

Socially Disadvantaged Farmer or Rancher- The term “Socially Disadvantaged” means an individual or entity who is a member of a socially disadvantaged group. For an entity, at least 50 percent ownership in the farm business must be held by socially disadvantaged individuals. A socially disadvantaged group is a group whose members have been subject to racial or ethnic prejudice because of their identity as members of a group without regard to their individual qualities.

These groups consist of the following:

- American Indians or Alaskan Natives
- Asians
- Blacks or African Americans
- Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders
- Hispanics.

Note: Gender alone is not a covered group for the purposes of NRCS conservation programs. The term entities reflect a broad interpretation to include partnerships, couples, legal entities, etc.

Veteran Farmer or Rancher- The term “Veteran Farmer or Rancher” means a farmer or rancher who:

- Served in the active military, naval, or air service, and
- Who was discharged or released from the service under conditions other than dishonorable, and
- Who has not operated a farm or ranch; or has operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10 consecutive years.

A legal entity or joint operation can be a Veteran Farmer or Rancher only if all individual members independently qualify.

10. Is any of the land offered for enrollment under this application:

- Certified Organic by the National Organic Program (NOP)**
- Transitioning to become Certified Organic by the NOP**
- Exempt from Organic Certification as defined by the NOP**
- Not Applicable**

Certification in any of these categories is to assist with planning and will not automatically result in the application being considered in any initiatives made available for organic-related production. Applicants must specifically request to participate in an organic initiative. Note that the EQIP Organic Initiative has a lower payment limitation (\$20,000/year and \$80,000 over any

6-year period per person or legal entity) than payments made to a person or legal entity under General EQIP.

On the farm(s) identified above, the Applicant agrees to participate in the identified program if the offer is accepted by the NRCS. The undersigned shall hereafter be referred to as the "Participant." The participant understands that starting a practice prior to contract approval causes the practice to be ineligible for program financial assistance. The participant will obtain the landowner's signature on the contract or provide written authorization to install structural or vegetative practices. The Participant agrees not to start any financially assisted practice or activity or engage the reimbursable services of a certified Technical Service Provider before a Contract is executed by CCC. The Participant may request, in writing, a waiver of this requirement for financially assisted practices by the NRCS State Conservationist.

All participants that certify land control or certify eligibility as Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher, Beginning Farmer or Rancher, or Veteran Farmer or Rancher will provide all records necessary to justify their claim as requested by a NRCS representative. It is the responsibility of the Participant to provide accurate information to support all items addressed in this application at the request of NRCS. False certifications are subject to criminal and civil fraud statutes.

The Participant acknowledges that highly erodible land conservation/wetland conservation, adjusted gross income certifications, and member information for entities and joint operations are on file with the FSA.

Each participant that is a non-individual receiving payment under an EIN is required to be registered in the CCR on SAM.gov before submitting this application and must provide a valid DUNS number on this application. Each applicable entity must continue to maintain an active registration with current information at all times during which it has a conservation program contract/agreement or an active application under consideration. NRCS may not enter into a conservation program contract/agreement with a non-individual until the all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements have been met. If a non-individual has not fully complied with these requirements by the time NRCS is ready to award the conservation program contract/agreement, NRCS may determine that the non-individual is not qualified to receive a conservation program contract/agreement and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

11. Yes No I have received a copy of the applicable conservation program contract appendix.

Applicant Signature	Date
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To file a complaint of discrimination, complete, sign, and mail a program discrimination complaint form, available at any USDA office location or online at <http://www.ascr.usda.gov>, or write to:



United States Department of Agriculture

Questions?



United States Department of Agriculture

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Helping People Help the Land

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