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**nracs**

**From:** Bill Stern [lilycoop1@earthlink.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, September 20, 2004 10:21 AM  
**To:** FarmBillRules  
**Subject:** Attn: Conservation Security Program

**Attachments:** tmp.htm



tmp.htm (5 KB)

Craig Dickerson, Program Manager  
Financial Assistance Programs Division  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
P.O. Box 2890  
Washington, DC 20013-2890

RE: Comments on Conservation Security Program Interim Final Rule

Dear Mr. Dickerson:

I am writing to comment on this farm bill that rewards those producers who choose to produce food in environmentally responsible ways. What a great idea. I am a social worker whose job is to produce food and teach others about sustainable and organic practices. I am personally aware of the many small things that could change in the wider world of food production that would make a great difference in the future for us as a food producing society. It is a wonderful idea to begin rewarding producers for making those changes.

My concern is that these rewards are given to those who really deserve it, and are given fairly. Please do not start a program that only rewards big companies that have caused our problems in the first place. Small producers have done all the work and research and deserve to be recognized. This turn toward sustainable food producing practices has come from people who care about people, the world, the soil, the food, ... not profit. Please make sure these people are not left out of the benefits of this bill. They did the work and kept the faith and deserve to be rewarded for that work.

I am including some points of interest about this bill that have been provided to me and make sense to me. Please give them due consideration.

1. Remove restrictions that now limit enrollment to only a few watersheds and certain "categories" of farmers and ranchers. CSP should be nationwide, without geographical restrictions. Participation in CSP should not be limited to particular watersheds.
2. Expand eligible resource concerns to all types of conservation objectives. Participation in CSP should include farmers and ranchers in all types of agriculture who are willing to commit to significant conservation practices. It should not be restricted to particular categories and subcategories of farmers and ranchers.
3. Eliminate the new "per acre" cap on contract payments. It favors large farms over small farms and those with high land rents over those with lower rental rates even if those farms may be practicing less conservation.
4. Expand enhancement payments to include the full range of options in the law, including crop rotations, rotational grazing, buffers, energy conservation, conservation and regeneration of plant and animal germplasm, environmentally sound management of invasive species, agro forestry practices, native prairie restoration, pollinator protection and enhancement, continued enhancement payments for on-farm/ranch research and demonstration activities and for on-farm/ranch assessment and evaluation activities.
5. Increase the cost-share rate for new practices.

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6. Remove requirements for a prior history of meeting high environmental standards, and instead require that high standards be met in a reasonable time after participating in the CSP.

The CSP has not only the potential, but also the imperative, to provide farmers and ranchers with meaningful incentives and rewards for implementing comprehensive protection of the nation's extremely valuable, natural resources.

Thank you for your work and please do your best to make sure this is fair and open to small producers who have done so much and truly care in a heartfelt way about the future of food production in our beautiful country.

Sincerely,  
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Project PPEP  
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