

2000 Environmental Quality Incentives Program



Customer Focus—

Dick Carr contacted the Plymouth County Farm planning program when he began renovation of his cranberry bogs. The bogs, not having any structural upgrades in over 20 years, were irregular in shape and out of grade. They are situated between two sensitive waterbodies. The farm plan developed through the program aided Dick in incorporating best management practices into the renovation of the bog system.

The NRCS EQIP helped finance the structural upgrades, including construction of a tailwater recovery system, reconstruction of existing dikes, installation of four flumes, and installation and upgrade of a sprinkler irrigation system. The upgrades will conserve water and create a closed water management system, which will prevent offsite movement of fertilizers and pesticides. The farm plan also helps growers comply with local, State, and Federal wetland regulations.

SNAP planner (right), and Dick Carr (left).



Massachusetts Summary

Overview

Massachusetts FY 2000 Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) took a comprehensive approach linking USDA programs and the Massachusetts Watershed Initiative to provide healthy and sustainable watersheds for Massachusetts. This year the program targeted 12 watersheds. EQIP was successful, receiving applications for over \$2.5 million of projected work and funding \$1.3 million of conservation work toward the protection of drinking water supplies, fisheries resources, shellfish beds and sustained watershed health. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) assisted landowners to develop 51 contracts that obligated over \$624,287 of Federal cost-share assistance. EQIP also funded \$55,000 for each of the past 3 years toward implementation of the Southeast Coastal Farm Planning pilot project. Over the past 6 years, this project has provided technical assistance to 325 farms and over 25,000 acres.

Accomplishments

FY 2000 EQIP provided \$624,287 financial assistance to 51 farms, including 22 livestock, 11 cranberry, and 18 vegetable or orchard operations. Conservation practices for livestock operations include waste storage, barnyard runoff management, heavy use areas, compost pads, nutrient management, and erosion control practices. Practices for vegetable farms and orchards include ag-chemical mixing facilities, trickle irrigation systems, integrated pest management, cover crops, nutrient management, diversions, and filter strips. Cost-shared practices for cranberry farms include tailwater recovery, bypass canals, compost facilities, integrated pest management and nutrient management, water conveyance systems, and irrigation water management.

Special Project Focus

In 1994, NRCS, Plymouth Conservation District, Cape Cod Cranberry Growers Association, and Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs joined forces to initiate a farm planning program to help cranberry growers respond to the growing public concern for environmental quality. With funding from partner agencies, including EQIP special project funding for technical assistance, it developed into a nonprofit program, Southeastern New England Agricultural Planning (SNAP), which provides high quality agricultural resource planning services to farmers throughout southeastern New England. In the last 6 years, more than 325 farm plans were completed on over 25,000 acres. SNAP is an adaptation and enhancement of the basic farm planning services conducted by the NRCS. It provides comprehensive resource management planning for nearly a dozen agricultural commodity groups, including cranberries, nurseries, orchards, vineyards, vegetables, livestock, forestry, and aquaculture.

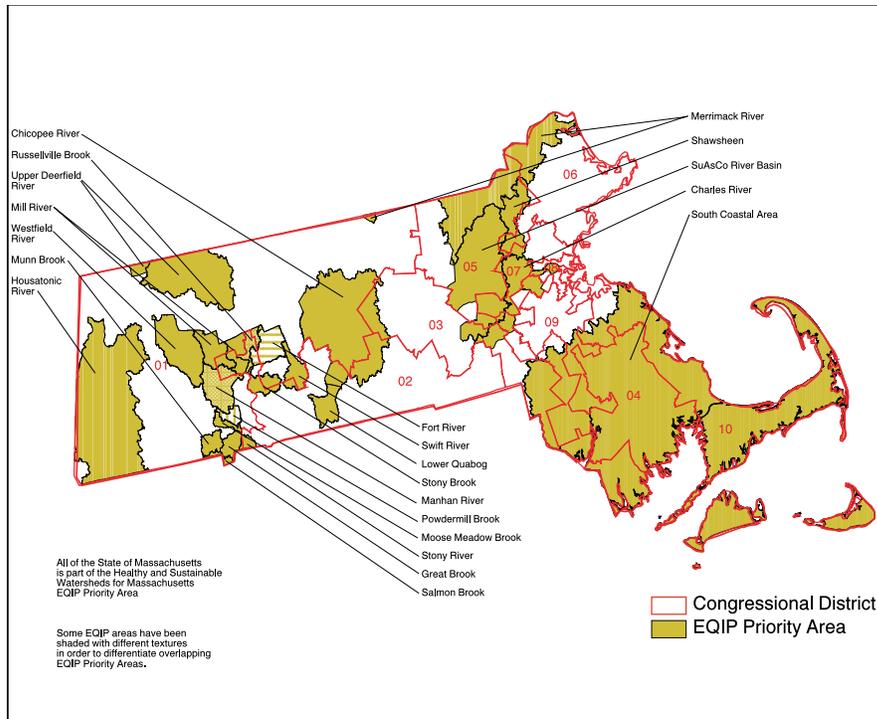
Outlook

EQIP works in concert with Massachusetts Agricultural Environmental Enhancement Program to help farmers implement best management practices and conservation systems needed to protect the Commonwealth's natural resources. However, with the recent focus on animal feeding operations, farmers have little financial incentive to implement planned waste management systems required to meet the national strategy. Additional EQIP funding would provide sorely needed financial assistance to help farmers afford critically needed conservation systems.

State Contact

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Massachusetts EQIP Priority Areas Within Congressional District



Massachusetts EQIP Dollars and Contracts by Congressional District

Congressional District	Fiscal Year 2000		Cumulative Total (97-00)	
	Number of Contracts	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts	Obligated Dollars
District 0	53	\$623,645	194	\$1,904,384
State Totals	53	\$623,645	194	\$1,904,384

Note: EQIP contracts for each Congressional District are estimated from Conservation Priority Areas which may include more than one district. Congressional District 0 = EQIP Contracts for Statewide Natural Resource Concerns which can be in any Congressional District in the state.

Source: FSA Recordset type01, data through 4th quarter FY2000

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