

2000 Environmental Quality Incentives Program



Customer Focus—

Jim Quarella, an Atlantic County fruit, vegetable, and specialty crop farmer, has reaped a myriad of benefits from involvement with the EQIP program. A cooperater with the local soil conservation district since 1949, Quarella updated his Bellview Farms conservation plan in 1997. He now receives financial and technical assistance through several Federal and state conservation assistance programs.

Through the combined EQIP and state CCSP, Quarella has installed, among his conservation practices, a 4,000-foot waterway and related erosion control measures, 800 feet of windbreak, and 19 acres of drip irrigation converted from overhead gun irrigation on his 160-acre farm. Combined with additional assistance through New Jersey farmland preservation funding and the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP), EQIP funding has allowed Quarella to make soil, water, and wildlife conservation improvements that he could not have otherwise made, and to increase farm income. Additionally, he has been able to diversify the farm operation in a time of rapidly changing market conditions and preserve Bellview Farms under intensifying pressure to sell his land to developers.

New Jersey Summary

Overview

Interest among the farm community in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) remains high. FY 2000 was the second year that NRCS leveraged state funding through EQIP. With over \$2 in state funding from the Conservation Cost-Share Program (CCSP) for every Federal \$1 spent for EQIP, more New Jersey producers have been able to implement conservation practices than in past years. New Jersey has four priority areas and an outside priority area. Four educational assistance plans have been approved for FY 2000 relating to irrigation water management, animal waste management, and integrated crop management. EQIP financial assistance has been obligated for a total of \$660,280.

Accomplishments

In FY 2000, the state technical committee meetings provided for input from various partners to improve ways that environmental benefits are factored into EQIP funding decisions. New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Farm Service Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Partners in Wildlife, New Jersey's Farmland Preservation Program, Northeast Organic Farmers Association, and other related organizations all participated in meetings with the goal of best addressing the needs of the farming community as well as the environment.

In FY 2000 statewide offers numbered as follows by practice:

- 69 Integrated Crop Management
- 22 Stream Corridor Management
- 15 Structural Erosion Control
- 6 Non-structural Erosion Control
- 16 Agricultural Chemical Handling Facilities
- 23 Waste Management
- 35 Irrigation
- 4 Permanent Vegetation
- 8 Grazing Land Management
- 11 Nutrient Management

Ninety-two offers were approved, with 65 percent for livestock practices.

Outlook

Additional technical assistance for EQIP is critically needed as the increasing interest in assistance through EQIP far outweighs NRCS staff time. Additional funding would provide increased opportunity to address the many critical agricultural natural resources conservation needs in New Jersey through the hiring of additional technical staff. Increased financial assistance is needed to help the farm community remain viable in a state that is too quickly losing farmland to development pressures.

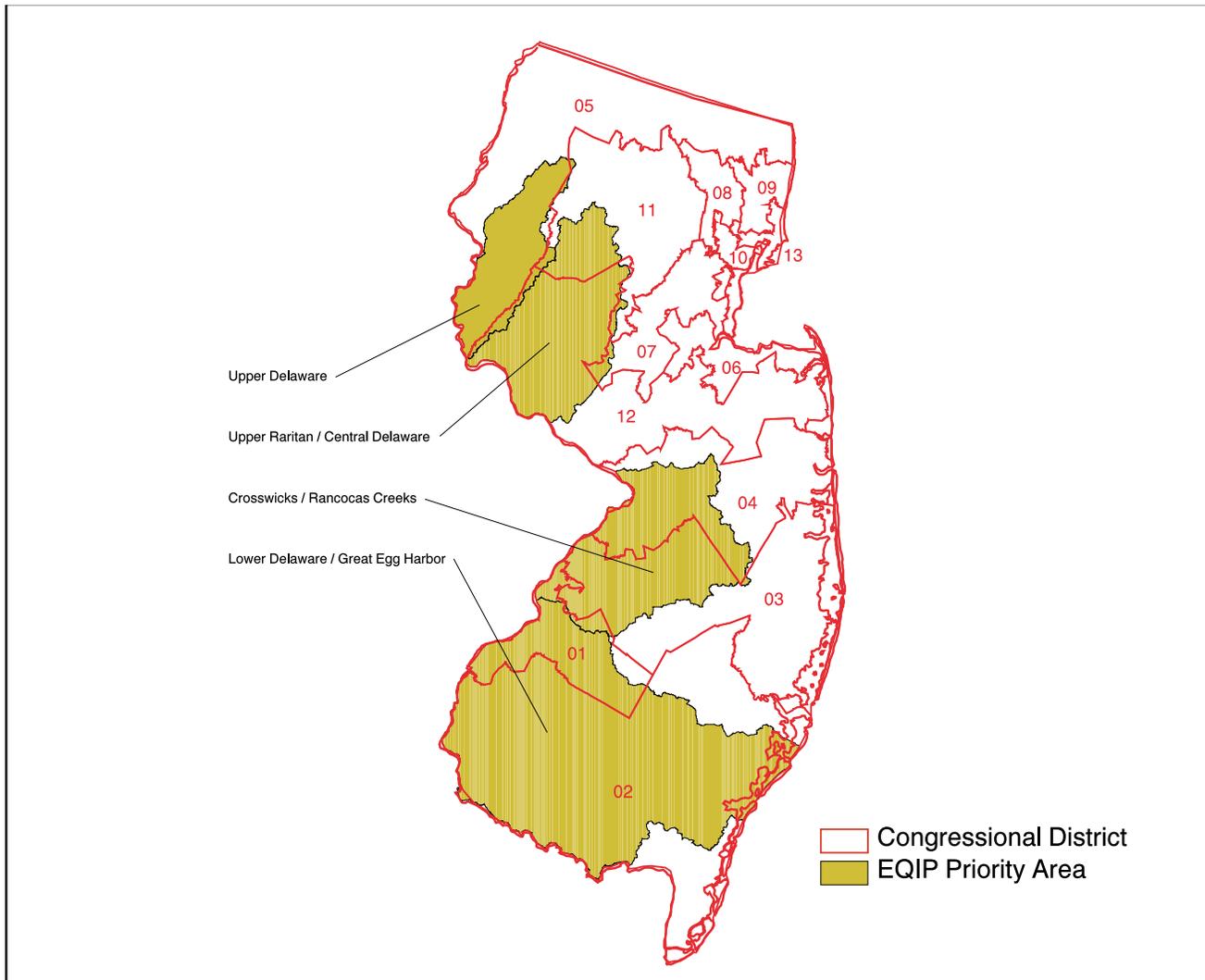
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High Point New Jersey,

New Jersey EQIP Priority Areas Within Congressional Districts



New Jersey EQIP Dollars and Contracts by Congressional District

Congressional Districts	Fiscal Year 2000		Cumulative Total (97-00)	
	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts
District 0	\$136,243	21	\$688,811	131
District 1	196,758	31	235,843	34
District 3	33,679	3	1,014,409	131
District 12	179,560	28	222,537	38
State Totals	\$546,240	83	\$2,161,600	334

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.

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