

2001 Environmental Quality Incentives Program



National Summary

Overview

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) provides financial, technical and educational assistance to eligible farmers and ranchers to address soil, water, and other related natural resource concerns on their lands, in an environmental beneficial and cost-effective manner. The purpose of EQIP is to carry out a single program in a manner that maximizes environmental benefits per dollar expended and that provides (1) flexible technical and financial assistance to farmers and ranchers that face the most serious natural resource problems (2) assistance to farmers and ranchers in complying with Federal, State, and tribal environmental laws, and encourage environmental enhancement (3) assistance to farmers and ranchers in making beneficial, cost-effective changes to measures needed to conserve and improve natural resources and (4) for the consolidation and simplification of the conservation planning process. Overall, EQIP attempts to achieve solutions to local community issues related to farms, ranches, and rural lands by implementation of structural, vegetative, and land management practices on eligible lands on a voluntary basis.

Program funding for EQIP is made available through the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC), as enacted under the 1996 Act. Cost-share payments are made available to eligible program participants in an amount not to exceed 75 percent of the cost to implement one or more structural or vegetative practices. Incentive payments are also available in an amount and rate determined by the Secretary to implement one or more land management practices.

Accomplishments

During FY2001 local work groups recommended nearly 1600 priority areas for approval to State Conservationists. Over 800 of these priority areas were approved. Since the inception of EQIP in 1997, over 2400 conservation priority areas have been nominated and over 1380 priority areas have received funding in at least one of the last four years. \$200 million dollars were allocated to States during FY2001. Of this amount, approximately \$158 million was used for financial assistance, \$3 million for educational assistance and \$38 million for technical assistance.

Outlook

We anticipate entering into approximately 7000 contracts obligating approximately \$151 million. At least 50% of these funds will be used to target natural resource concerns related to animal operations. The remaining balance will be used for irrigation water management, to reduce soil erosion and to improve water quality. We plan to enter into agreements totaling approximately \$1.5 million for education activities to assist farmers in installing and managing conservation practices.

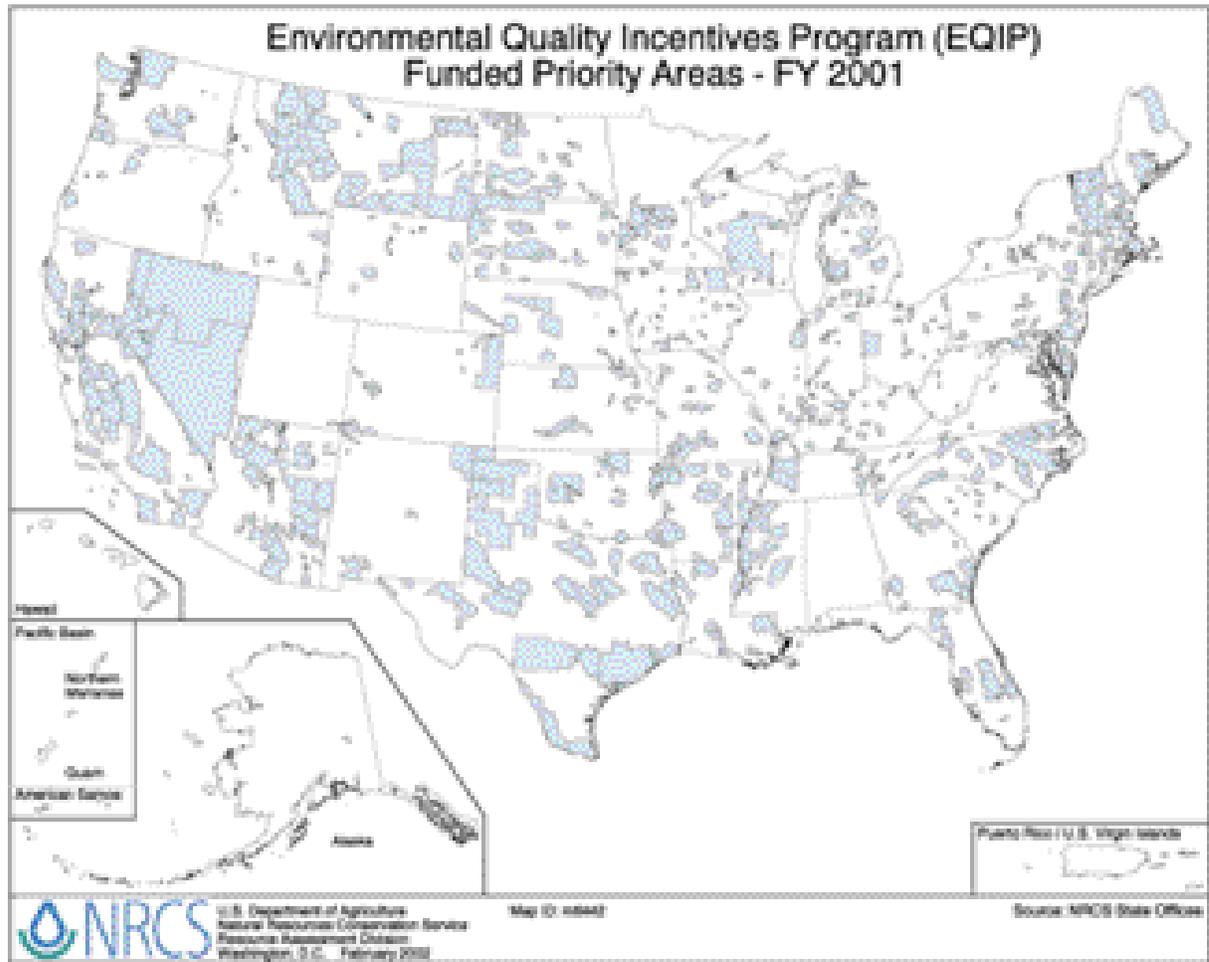
In order to make EQIP the best program possible for customers, a locally led process is used. Some states do not use locally-led to the maximum and some District officials are sensitive to this. This allows States and local working groups to direct the program to meet their most serious resource concerns.

National Contact

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National EQIP Priority Areas Within Congressional Districts



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