Ranking Tool Summary

for FY2014 - Cropland

(Released 01/09/2014)

Description:

This ranking tool and fund code will be used for all 2014 EQIP Cropland applications statewide in Connecticut. The scores will be used for selecting applications for contract development in 2014. The scores this ranking tool calculates will be used to evaluate and rank applications

Land Uses:

Crop, Farmstead

National Priorities:

Scoring Multiplier: 1.000

Scoring Ranges and Results Text:

High: 250 - 145	Medium: 144 - 75	Low: 74 - 0
This application ranks in the High range by meeting a significant number of the National EQIP priorities	This application ranks in the Medium range for meeting a beneficial number of the National EQIP priorities	This application ranks in the Low range for meeting only a few or none of the National EQIP priorities

Questions:

Number	Question	Points
1	a. Is the program application to support the development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP)? If answer is “Yes”, do not answer any other national level questions. If answer is “No”, proceed with evaluation to address the remaining questions in this section.	250
2	a. Meet regulatory requirements relating to animal feeding operations, or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?	15
2	b. Reduce sediment, nutrients or pesticides from agricultural operations located within a field that adjoins a designated "impaired water body" (TMDL, 303d, etc.)?	15
2	c. Reduce sediment, nutrients or pesticides from agricultural operations located within a field that adjoins a "non-impaired water body"?	5
3	a. Decrease aquifer overdraft?	15
3	b. Conserve water from irrigation system improvements and saved water will be available for other beneficial uses?	10
3	c. Conserve water in an area where the applicant participates in a geographically established or watershed-wide project?	5
4	a. Meet on-farm regulatory requirements relating to air quality or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?	15
4	b. Reduce on-farm generated green house gases such as CO2 (Carbon Dioxide), CH4 (Methane), and N2O (Nitrous Oxide)?	15
4	c. Increase on-farm carbon sequestration?	5
5	a. Reduce erosion to tolerable limits (Soil "T")?	15
5	b. Improve soil tilth, organic matter, structure, health, etc.?	5
6	a. Benefit on-farm habitat associated with threatened and endangered, at-risk, candidate, or species of concern as identified in a State wildlife plan?	15
6	b. Help retain wildlife and plant habitat on land exiting the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)?	10
7	a. Help manage or control noxious or invasive plant species on non-cropland?	10
7	b. Increase, or improve habitat to benefit pollinator or other targeted wildlife species?	10
7	c. Properly dispose of livestock carcasses?	5
7	d. Are identified in an Integrated Pest Management plan?	10
7	e. Are identified in a Nutrient Management plan?	10

7	f. Apply principles of adaptive nutrient management?	5
8	a. Reduce energy consumption on the agricultural operation?	15
8	b. Increase on-farm energy efficiency with practices and improvements identified in an approved energy audit equivalent to criteria required in Ag EMP?	10
8	c. Assist in implementing energy conservation measures that also reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollutants?	10
9	a. Implementation of all conservation practices scheduled in the contract on the CPA-1155 within three years of date of obligation?	10
9	b. Improvement of existing conservation practices or conservation systems already in place at the time the application is accepted?	5
9	c. Implementation of practice(s) which will complete an existing conservation system or suite of practices?	5
	Total Points	500

State Issues:

Scoring Multiplier: 1.250

Scoring Ranges and Results Text:

High: 400 - 250	Medium: 249 - 110	Low: 109 - 0
This application ranks in the High range for meeting a significant number of Connecticut state level EQIP priorities	This application ranks in the Medium range for meeting a beneficial number of Connecticut state level EQIP priorities	This application ranks in the Low range for meeting only a few of Connecticut state level EQIP priorities

Questions:

Sub-heading Number	Question Number	Question	Points
1		Water Conservation - 30 pts (answer either a] or b])	
	1	a. Are the practices part of an Irrigation Water Management Plan that results in a minimum reduction of water use of 35%?	20
	1	b. Are the practices part of an Irrigation Water Management Plan that results in a reduction of water use of .less than 35%, but more than a minimum of 20% as determined by CT NRCS?	15
	1	c. Will irrigation water be captured and reused, e.g. flood table or ebb/flow bench recirculation system through 443, Irrigation Surface/Subsurface	10
2		Water Quality - 85pts	
	2	a. Will the producer implement a Nutrient Management Plan that meets NRCS specifications for applying fertilizer according to June Nitrate testing?	30
	2	b. Will the planned practice(s) reduce the risk of nutrient or sediment transport to surface water through the implementation of buffers or filter strips between fields and any surface water?	30
	2	Does the contract application include 595, IPM or other practices to assist with the mitigation of the impacts of pesticide application? (For example, 386 Field Border, 390 Riparian Herbaceous Cover, 391 Riparian Forest Buffer)	25
3		Soil Condition - 100 pts	
	3	a. Will the contracted practices include either 329 (No-Till) or 345(Reduced Till) and result in the minimal possible disturbance to the soil for the applicable crop type?	25
	3	b. Will the contracted practices in annual crop fields result in MORE than 2 major crop types in the planned rotation (this includes the cash crop)? (Types=WSG, CSG, WSB, CSB). On perennial systems (hay, pasture, orchard) 3 or more families must be present in the cover.	25

	3	c. Will the contracted practices provide adequate residue cover? 329 and/or 345 will be contracted to ensure that the minimum residue at the time of planting is 75%.	25
	3	d. Does the contract include practices 340 or 328 which will result in a condition where a living root is in the soil for the longest possible time? The conservation plan will set specific time frames: Maximum of 30 days between termination of cover crop and planting of cash crop. Maximum 2 weeks after harvest for planting of cover crop. Goal is 65% coverage with live root before ground freeze and 85% coverage when cover crop is terminated.	25
4		Soil Erosion - 55 pts (answer either a] or b])	
	4	a. Does an identified resource concern of sheet and rill erosion exist, and are contracted practices expected to reduce the soil loss from above "T" to "T" according to RUSLE2?	20
	4	b. Does an identified resource concern of sheet and rill erosion exist, and are contracted practices expected to reduce the soil loss from above "T" to below "T" according to RUSLE2?	30
	4	c. Is gully erosion an identified resource concern and are ALL instances are being treated through contracted practices: 412 Grassed Waterway, 468 Lined Waterway, 362 Diversion, or 600 Terrace?	25
5		Wildlife - 30 pts	
	5	a. Does the contract include practices like 327 Conservation Cover, 393 Field Borders, 391 Riparian Forest Buffers, 380 Windbreak/Shelterbelt Development, 612 Tree/Shrub Planting, 395 IPM or 647 Early Successional Habitat Management that are designed to benefit pollinators or other wildlife? (refer to New England Pollinator Handbook for design recommendations)	30
		Maximum Points: 320 Total Points	335

Local Issues:

Scoring Multiplier: 1.613

Scoring Ranges and Results Text:

High: 250 - 145	Medium: 144 - 75	Low: 74 - 0
This application ranks in the High range for meeting a significant number of the Local criteria that consider ecology and specific resource concerns.	This application ranks in the Medium range for meeting a moderate number of the Local criteria that consider ecology and specific resource concerns.	This application ranks in the Low range for meeting only a few or none of the Local criteria that consider ecology and specific resource concerns.

Questions:

Sub-heading Number	Question Number	Question	Points
1		Location	
	1	a. Is this an application for practices to address water quality at a confined livestock feeding operation that is located in a twelve (12) digit Hydrologic Unit code (HUC) watershed of a 303(d) listed stream?	25
	1	b. Is this application located in a Public Water Supply Watershed or designated Aquifer Protection Area AND does it contain practices that address water quality?	40
	1	c. Does the contract application involves land that has been permanently protected through federal, state, local government programs or private land trusts?	15
2		Degree of Cooperation by Producer	
	2	a. Have other Federal, State, local, or non governmental organization financial resources been committed to this project?	10

	2	b.If the applicant has an existing EQIP contract, has it been, and is it now, on schedule and in full compliance?	10
	2	c. Did the applicant successfully complete any past contract(s) in full compliance?	5
	2	d. Is this the applicant's first EQIP application?	5
3		Magnitude of Expected Benefits	
	3	a. Does the contract application have energy as a secondary resource concern?	15
	3	b. Does the contract application involve conservation of surface and/or groundwater (i.e. irrigation water management)	15
	3	c. Will the practices in this contract directly benefit threatened or endangered species according to results obtained from the CT-DEEP NDDB (Natural Diversity Database)?	10
	3	d. Has the producer completed, or is currently enrolled in, an organic certification program recognized by USDA?	10
		Maximum Points: 155 Total Points	160