Ranking Tool Summary

for FY2014 - FY14 Organic Transition

(Released 01/09/2014)

Description:

This ranking tool and fund code will be used for all 2014 EQIP Transitioning to Organic 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, Forest, Pasture

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: 1.000

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		If the application is for development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP), the agency will assign significant ranking priority and conservation benefit by answering “Yes” to the following question. Answering “Yes” to question 1a will result in the application being awarded the maximum amount of points that can be earned for the state priority category.	
	1	a Is the program application for development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP) for a TSP prepared Transition to Organic Plan (138)? If answer is “Yes”, do not answer any other state level questions. If answer is “No”, proceed with evaluation to address the remaining questions in this section.	400
2		Soil Quality Degradation: Answer all questions that apply for a maximum of 45 points.	
	2	a EQIP Schedule of Operations includes implementation of two or more soil quality or enhancing practices that address soil tilth, crusting, water infiltration, organic matter compaction, etc.?	45
	2	b EQIP Schedule of Operations includes implementation of one soil quality or enhancing practice that addresses soil tilth, crusting, water infiltration, organic matter, compaction, etc.?	25
3		Soil Erosion: Maximum of 45 points	
	3	a Does the EQIP Schedule of Operations include practices that will result in reduction of erosion?	45
4		Water Quality Degradation: Answer all that apply for a maximum of 110 points	
	4	a EQIP Schedule of Operations includes 595 Integrated Pest Management?	45
	4	b EQIP Schedule of operations includes implementation of practices for the management of noxious and invasive species ONLY on “non-cropland” acreage?	20
	4	c EQIP Schedule of Operations includes implementation of practice 590 Nutrient	45

		management for management of soil fertility, plant nutrients, and soil amendments?	
5		Degraded Plant Condition: Answer all that apply for a maximum of 90 points	
	5	a EQIP Schedule of Operations includes practices that will result in creation of buffer zones that will mitigate offsite contaminates from entering farm?	30
	5	b EQIP Schedule of Operations includes practices with the intent of increasing habitat for pollinators and/or beneficial insects?	30
	5	c EQIP Schedule of Operations includes practice(s) that support Integrated Pest Management?	30
6		Insufficient Water: Answer all that apply for a maximum of 50 points	
	6	a Practices scheduled in the EQIP Schedule of Operations will improve the efficiency of an existing irrigation system?	25
	6	b EQIP Schedule of Operations will include practices that will improve irrigation water management and/or conserve soil moisture?	25
7		Livestock Production Limitation: Answer all that apply for a maximum of 60 points	
	7	a EQIP Schedule of Operations includes implementation of practice 528 Prescribed Grazing AND/OR 512 Pasture & Hayland Planting for management of plant species, livestock, residues, feed, and other identified resource needs?	30
	7	b EQIP Schedule of Operations includes implementation of practices that limit and manage domestic livestock access to streams, creeks, and other natural water bodies?	20
	7	c EQIP Schedule of Operations includes implementation of practices to assure adequate domestic livestock drinking water sources (not to include streams) are available in the treatment unit?	10
		Maximum Points: 400 Total Points	825

Local Issues:

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 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		If the application is for development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP), the agency will assign significant ranking priority and conservation benefit by answering YES to the following question. Answering YES to question 1 will result in the application being awarded the maximum amount of points that can be earned for the state priority category.	
	1	a Is the program application for development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP) for a TSP prepared Transition to Organic Plan (138)? If answer is “Yes”, do not answer any other Local Level questions. If answer is “No”, proceed with evaluation to address the remaining questions in this section.	150
2		Location	
	2	a. 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

	2	b. 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
	2	c. Does the contract application involves land that has been permanently protected through federal, state, local government programs or private land trusts?	15
3		Degree of Cooperation by Producer	
	3	a. Have other Federal, State, local, or non governmental organization financial resources been committed to this project?	10
	3	b. If the applicant has an existing EQIP contract, has it been, and is it now, on schedule and in full compliance?	10
	3	c. Did the applicant successfully complete any past contract(s) in full compliance?	5
	3	d. Is this the applicant's first EQIP application?	5
4		Magnitude of Expected Benefits	
	4	a. Does the contract application involve conservation of surface and/or groundwater (i.e. irrigation water management)	15
	4	b. Will the practices in this contract directly benefit threatened or endangered species according to results obtained from the CT-DEEP NDDB (Natural Diversity Database)?	15
	4	c. Does the contract application have energy as a secondary resource concern?	10
		Maximum Points: 150 Total Points	300