

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

AGENCY: Natural Resources Conservation Service, Commodity Credit Corporation

ACTION: NOTICE

Conservation Innovation Grants Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 Announcement for Program Funding – New Jersey

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 10.912

**SUMMARY:** The New Jersey State Office of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS-NJ), an agency under the United States Department of Agriculture, is announcing availability of Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies. Applications are accepted from all 50 States, Caribbean Area (Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands), and the Pacific Islands Area (Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) for projects located entirely within New Jersey. NRCS-NJ anticipates that the amount available for support of this program in FY 2014 will be approximately **\$148,000**. Applications are requested from eligible governmental or non-governmental organizations or individuals for competitive consideration of grant awards for projects between 1 and 3 years in duration.

Funds will be awarded through a two-phase competitive grants process that will include (1) a pre-proposal process and (2) a full proposal process. The full proposal process will only be open to applicants whose pre-proposal applications are selected by NRCS-NJ. Both phases are described in this announcement, but **only pre-proposals are being solicited at this time**.

This notice identifies the objectives, eligibility criteria, and application instructions for CIG projects. Applications will be screened for completeness and compliance with the provisions of this notice. Incomplete applications will be eliminated from competition, and notification of elimination will be mailed to the applicant. NRCS will request a full proposal package only from those applicants selected in the pre-proposal phase.

**DATES:** Applications for the pre-proposal phase must be received at the NRCS-NJ State Office by 4 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST) on **April 30, 2014**. Notification of selected pre-proposal applications will be announced by **May 12, 2014**. Selected applicants will then be required to submit a full proposal package to the NRCS-NJ State Office by 4 p.m. EST on **June 30, 2014**.

**ADDRESSES:** Applications sent via hand-delivery, express mail, overnight courier service or regular mail must be sent to the following address: Natural Resources Conservation Service, Conservation Innovation Grants Program, 220 Davidson Avenue 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Somerset NJ 08873.

Applications sent electronically must be sent to [Gregory.Westfall@nj.usda.gov](mailto:Gregory.Westfall@nj.usda.gov) or [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)

For more information contact:

Greg Westfall  
New Jersey CIG Program Manager  
220 Davidson Avenue 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Somerset NJ 08873  
Phone: (732) 537-6054  
E-mail: [Gregory.Westfall@nj.usda.gov](mailto:Gregory.Westfall@nj.usda.gov)

## SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

### I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

#### A. Legislative Authority

The Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) program was authorized as part of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) [16 U.S.C. 3839aa-8] under Section 2509 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-246). The Secretary of Agriculture delegated the authority for the administration of EQIP and CIG to the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), who is Vice President of the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC). EQIP is funded and administered by NRCS under the authorities of the CCC.

#### B. Overview

The purpose of CIG is to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies, while leveraging the Federal investment in environmental enhancement and protection in conjunction with agricultural production. CIG projects are expected to lead to the transfer of conservation technologies, management systems, and innovative approaches into NRCS policy, technical manuals, guides, and references, or to the private sector. **CIG does not fund research projects. Projects intended to test hypotheses do not qualify for a CIG grant.** CIG is used to apply or demonstrate previously proven technology. It is a vehicle to stimulate development and adoption of conservation approaches or technologies that have been studied sufficiently to indicate a high likelihood of success, and that are a candidate for eventual technology transfer or institutionalization. CIG promotes sharing of skills, knowledge, technologies, and facilities among communities, governments, and other institutions to ensure that scientific and technological developments are accessible to a wider range of users. CIG funds projects targeting innovative on-the-ground conservation, including pilot projects and field demonstrations.

A two-phase evaluation process will be utilized for applications submitted under this notice. The first phase requires the applicant to submit a pre-proposal. Applications will be evaluated by NRCS-NJ staff under the bulleted topics identified by the applicant (see section I.D). Applications will be screened for completeness and compliance with the provisions of this notice. Incomplete applications will be eliminated from competition, and notification of elimination will be mailed to the applicant.

NRCS-NJ will accept applications for single or multi-year projects, not to exceed 3 years, submitted by from eligible entities including federally recognized Indian tribes, State and local units of government, and non-governmental organizations and individuals. Applications are accepted from all 50 States, the Caribbean Area (Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands), and the Pacific Islands Area (Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) for projects located entirely within New Jersey.

NRCS-NJ will only request a full proposal package from those applicants selected in the pre-proposal process. Complete applications received by applicable deadlines will be evaluated by a technical peer review panel based on the Criteria for Application Evaluation identified in the application instructions in section VI.B.

Full proposal applications will be forwarded to a technical peer review panel. The peer review panel will make recommendations for project approval to the NRCS-NJ State Conservationist who will make the final selections.

### **C. Innovative Conservation Projects or Activities**

For the purposes of CIG, the proposed innovative project or activity must encompass the development, field testing, evaluation, implementation, and monitoring of:

- Conservation adoption approaches or incentive systems; or
- Promising conservation technologies, practices, systems, procedures, or approaches; or
- Environmental soundness with goals of environmental protection and natural resource enhancement.

To be given priority consideration, the innovative project or activity should:

- Make use of a proven technology or a technology that has been studied sufficiently to indicate a high probability for success;
- Demonstrate and verify environmental (soil, water, air, plants, energy, and animal) effectiveness, utility, affordability, and usability of conservation technology in the field;
- Adapt conservation technologies, practices, systems, procedures, approaches, and incentive systems to improve performance and encourage adoption;
- Introduce conservation systems, approaches, and procedures from another geographic area or agricultural sector;
- Adapt conservation technology, management, or incentive systems to improve performance; and
- Demonstrate transferability of knowledge.

### **D. New Jersey Competition**

For FY 2014, NRCS-NJ will consider offering CIG in the following areas:

Pre-proposals that demonstrate the use of innovative technologies and/or approaches to address at least one bulleted topic listed below will be considered. Pre-proposals must identify the most appropriate bulleted topic the innovation/technology is addressing. While NRCS-NJ is interested in receiving proposals for each bulleted topic below, special interest is placed on receiving proposals that address topics identified as “Priority Needs.” Additional topics (not listed below) may be considered at the State Conservationist’s discretion. If an additional topic is proposed for the State Conservationist’s consideration, it must be identified as such in the pre-proposal.

#### ***1. Program Outreach***

##### **Priority Needs:**

- Demonstration of new or novel technology that can easily and inexpensively be adopted by small-scale producers in order to address their natural resource concerns.
- Demonstration of new or novel technologies that lead to significant management efficiencies in farm resource management from a systems perspective, including technologies that lead to demonstrated benefits to multiple ecosystem services.

## 1. *Program Outreach (Continued)*

### **Priority Needs:(Continued)**

- Projects that assess conservation needs and opportunities for the New Jersey aquaculture industry where findings can be incorporated into Farm Bill conservation programs.
- Projects that assess energy conservation needs for New Jersey agriculture including the greenhouse industry and determine how to reach out to them regarding the EQIP energy initiative.

### **Other Needs:**

- Technology transfer to individuals and entities including, but not limited to, Beginning Farmers or Ranchers, Socially Disadvantaged Farmers or Ranchers, Limited Resource Farmers or Ranchers, Veteran farmers, Indian tribes, Land Grant Colleges and Universities, or Community-Based Organizations.
- Projects that assess resource conditions and land capabilities for traditionally underserved groups and communities.
- Projects that emphasize program outreach to underserved producers or landowners.
- Projects that enhance opportunities to work with universities and other institutions to develop technical training for Beginning Farmers or Ranchers, Limited Resource Farmers or Ranchers, Socially Disadvantaged Farmers or Ranchers, Veteran farmers, and Indian tribes or entities servicing those landowners.

## 2. *Nutrient Management*

### **Priority Needs:**

- Demonstrate and quantify the optimal combinations of nutrient source, application rate, placement, and application timing (4 Rs), as measured by impact on nutrient use efficiency and yield for one or more of the following: corn, soybeans, wheat, vegetables, and/or hay/pasture. Demonstrations are encouraged that show how these optimal combinations change for one or more of the following comparisons: irrigated vs. non-irrigated management, tillage vs. reduced tillage systems, manure-amended vs. non manure-amended systems, and/or organic vs. conventional production systems.

### **Other Needs:**

- Demonstrate and quantify the effectiveness of bundling conservation measures to avoid, control, and trap nutrient losses from the field.
- Demonstrate and quantify the effectiveness of methods to capture dissolved phosphorus from field runoff and subsurface drainage.

### 3. *Energy Conservation*

#### **Priority Needs:**

- Develop and/or demonstrate innovative implementation systems to achieve greater use and quantify benefits of energy audits that address cropland, buildings, and equipment including greenhouse operations.

#### **Other Needs:**

- Evaluate and demonstrate energy efficiency systems that reduce the need for fossil fuel energy and meet on-farm energy needs, while increasing energy efficiency and/or reducing environmental contaminants (e.g. greenhouse gas emissions).

### 4. *Soil Health*

#### **Priority Needs:**

- Demonstrate soil quality management in perennial crops (eg. Blueberries) including investigation of cost effective ways to add permanent cover between rows that will result in increased organic matter, control erosion and positively impact crop production and management.
- Demonstrate soil quality management in intensive production schemes including investigation of cost effective ways to add organic matter and control erosion in production systems that make extensive use of plastic mulch and seasonal high tunnels.
- Inventory urban farms and community gardens, identify resource concerns and develop recommendations for technical assistance, financial assistance and outreach that NRCS could provide; especially as it relates to soil health, soil contamination and food safety.
- Development of optimal species mixes, seeding rates, seeding dates and seeding methods (e.g., inter-seeding, inter-cropping, frost-seeding) to enhance cover crop establishment/survival and increase soil organic matter.
- Demonstrate and quantify the impacts of cover crop presence, species mix, and management (e.g., termination growth stage, tillage practice) on soil water content and subsequent crop yield across a range of climates and cropping systems.
- Demonstrate and quantify impacts of soil health promoting practices (e.g., no-tillage, cover crops, crop rotations) on yield, yield variability, and economics of crop production across a range of soils, cropping systems, and climates.

#### **Other Needs:**

- Demonstrate and quantify the impacts of cover crops, crop rotations, tillage and/or soil amendments on soil chemical, physical, and/or biological properties and their relationships with nutrient cycling, soil water availability, and plant growth.
- Demonstrate and quantify the rate of increase in available soil water holding capacity as a function of soil properties (e.g., organic matter, particle size, mineralogy), management practices (e.g., tillage, amendments, cover crop or crop residue inputs), and/or climate.

#### **4. Soil Health (Continued)**

##### **Other Needs:**

- Demonstrate and quantify the impacts of Soil Health Management Systems (e.g., cover crops, reduced tillage) on key soil health attributes (e.g., available water holding capacity, disease suppression, nutrient cycling) and determine the extent to which the rates of change are influenced by climate, organic input chemical composition/placement, and soil properties (e.g., particle size, mineralogy). This should be conducted across a range of inherent soil properties, cropping systems, and climates to develop a Decision Support Tool that promotes selection and design of the components of a Soil Health Management System.
- Demonstrate the use of summer cover crop and determine the opportunities and barriers relating to producers using summer cover crop.

#### **5. Wildlife**

##### **Priority Needs:**

- Develop regional, crop-specific guidance providing the vegetative species, landforms, and necessary acreage to support appropriate populations of managed and wild pollinators per unit area of pollinated crops (i.e., describe the components of the landscape).

#### **6. Economics**

##### **Priority Needs:**

- Develop tool for measuring economic returns of conservation for landowners. The tool should be useful for analyzing and demonstrating the financial costs and potential returns of alternative conservation practices, taking into account such factors as land characteristics and production potential. The tool should adhere to the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association standards for estimating farm costs and returns, including estimating opportunity costs for operator labor and management, be easy to use and understand, and provide transparent calculations.

##### **Other Needs:**

- Develop a tool for analyzing the economics of growing conservation plants focused on limited resource farmers to answer questions on what is the market and how much to grow.

### **FUNDING AVAILABILITY**

#### **A. New Jersey Competition**

NRCS-NJ anticipates that the amount available for support of this program in FY 2014 will be approximately **\$148,000**.

CIG will fund single and multi-year projects, not to exceed 3 years (anticipated project start date of **September 1, 2014**). Funds will be awarded through a statewide competitive grants process. The maximum award amount for any project will not exceed **\$75,000** in FY 2014.

## II. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS AND INFORMATION

### A. Applicant Eligibility

CIG applicants must be a federally recognized Indian Tribe, State or local unit of government, non-governmental organization, or individual.

### B. Project Eligibility

To be eligible for a CIG, projects must involve landowners who meet the EQIP eligibility requirements set forth in [16 U.S.C. 3839aa-1](#). Additional information regarding EQIP eligibility requirements can be found at:

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/eqip>. Participating producers are not required to have an EQIP contract.

### C. Matching Funds Requirements

Selected applicants may receive CIG grants of up to 50 percent of their total project cost not to exceed \$75,000. CIG recipients must match the USDA funds awarded on a dollar-for-dollar basis from non-Federal sources with cash and in-kind contributions. Of the applicant's required match (at least 50 percent of the total project budget), the contribution from cash sources must be at least 50 percent of the Federal request; the remainder may come from in-kind contributions.

The limit on in-kind contributions does not apply to projects carried out by a Beginning Farmer or Rancher, Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher, federally recognized Indian Tribes, members of federally recognized Indian Tribes, or a community-based organization comprised of or representing them. Instead, the contribution from cash sources must be at least 25 percent of the Federal request; the remainder may come from in-kind contributions. This exception is intended to help these individuals and entities meet the statutory requirements for receiving a CIG.

**Matching funds must be secured at time of application.** Applications should include written verification of commitments of matching support (including both cash and in-kind contributions) from third parties. Additional information about matching funds can be found at [2 CFR 215](#).

### D. EQIP Payment Limitation and Duplicate Payments

Subject to limited exception, section 1240G of the Food Security Act of 1985, [16 U.S.C. 3839aa-7](#), imposes a \$450,000 limitation for all cost-share or incentive payments disbursed to individuals or entities under an EQIP contract.

The limitation applies to CIG in the following manner:

- CIG funds are awarded through grant agreements. These grant agreements are not EQIP contracts; thus, CIG awards in and of themselves are not limited by the payment limitation.
- Direct or indirect payments made to an individual or entity using funds from a CIG award to carry out structural, vegetative, or management practices count toward each individual's or entity's EQIP payment limitation. Through project progress reports, CIG grantees are responsible for certifying that individuals or entities involved in CIG projects do not exceed the payment limitation. All direct and indirect payments made to individuals or entities using CIG funds must be reported

to the NRCS CIG program manager in the semi-annual report. Further, all individuals or entities receiving direct or indirect payments through participation in a CIG project must also meet the EQIP eligibility requirements.

- In addition, section 1240B, 16 U.S.C. 3839aa-2, prohibits duplicative payments. Accordingly, direct or indirect payments cannot be made for a practice for which an individual or entity has already received funds, or is contracted to receive funds through any USDA conservation programs (e.g., EQIP, Agricultural Management Assistance, Conservation Security Program, Conservation Stewardship Program, Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program).

To participate in EQIP financial assistance, an individual or entity must meet the eligibility requirements in 7 CFR 1466.8, which include the following:

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Potential Verification Documentation*</b>
Be in compliance with the highly erodible land and wetland conservation provisions (7 CFR Part 12)	Documentation of their compliance status can be obtained by the producer at their local USDA Service Center or through the USDA customer service on-line portal
Have an interest in the agricultural operation as defined in 7 CFR Part 1400	Documentation of their farm interest can be obtained by the producer at their local USDA Service Center or through the USDA customer service on-line portal showing that the producer has farm records established
Have control of the land for the term of the proposed contract period	Documentation can be provided in the form of a deed, lease, or other documents which show the producer has adequate control for the term of the proposed contract period
The average adjusted gross income of the individual, joint operation, or legal entity may not exceed \$900,000 unless not less than 66.66 percent of the average adjusted gross income of the person, joint operation, or legal entity is average adjusted gross farm income (7 CFR Part 1400)	If using FY 2009-2014 CIG funding, documentation of a producer's Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) eligibility status can be obtained by the producer at their local USDA Service Center, or through the USDA customer service on-line portal.

\*Many of the verification documents will require that the producer have current records established with the Farm Service Agency or require that the producer establish new records.

**E. Beginning or Limited Resource Farmers or Ranchers, or Indian Tribes, or community-based organizations comprised of or representing these entities**

For the FY 2014 CIG award process, up to 10 percent of the total funds available for CIG may be set-aside for applications from Historically Underserved Producers (Beginning Farmers or Ranchers, Socially Disadvantaged Farmers or Ranchers, and Limited Resource Farmers or Ranchers), Veteran farmers, Indian Tribes, or community-based organizations comprised of or representing these entities.



To compete for these set-aside funds, the applicant must make a declaration in the application as described in Part V.A.10. of this notice. Applications that are unsuccessful in the set-aside competition will automatically be placed in the general application pool for consideration. Funds not used in the set-aside pool will revert back into the general funding pool. Listed are the regulatory definitions of a Beginning Farmer or Rancher and a Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher, which are found at [7 CFR 1466.27](#):

***Beginning Farmer or Rancher*** - a person or legal entity who:

- Has not operated a farm or ranch, or who has operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10 consecutive years. This requirement applies to all members of an entity who will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm or ranch;
- In the case of a contract with an individual, individually, or with the immediate family, material and substantial participation requires that the individual provide substantial day-to-day labor and management of the farm or ranch consistent with the practices in the county or State where the farm is located; and
- In the case of a contract with an entity or joint operation, all members must materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm or ranch. Material and substantial participation requires that each of the members provide some amount of the management or labor and management necessary for day-to-day activities, such that if each of the members did not provide these inputs, operation of the farm or ranch would be seriously impaired.

***Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher***

- A person with direct or indirect gross farm sales not more than \$155,200 in each of the previous 2 years (adjusted for inflation using Prices Paid by Farmer Index as compiled by National Agricultural Statistical Service); and
- Has a total household income at or below the national poverty level for a family of four, or less than 50 percent of county median household income in each of the previous 2 years (to be determined annually using Department of Commerce data).

#### **F. Activities Limitation and Implementation**

Technologies and approaches that are eligible for funding in a project's geographic area through EQIP are ineligible for CIG funding except where the use of those technologies and approaches demonstrates clear innovation. The burden falls on the applicant to sufficiently describe the innovative features of the proposed technology or approach. Applicants should reference the appropriate State's EQIP Eligible Practices List by contacting the applicable [NRCS State office](#).

The grantee is responsible for providing the technical assistance required to successfully implement and complete the project. NRCS will designate a Program Contact, Administrative Contact, and Technical Contact to provide oversight for each project receiving an award.

### III. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION FOR PRE-PROPOSALS

All Office of Management and Budget standard forms necessary for CIG submission are posted on the following Web site: [Grants.gov - Forms Repository](http://www.grants.gov).

#### A. How to Obtain Materials

The announcement for this CIG funding opportunity can be found on the following Web sites: [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) and <http://www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/cig/index.html>.

#### B. Content and Format

Applications must contain the content, format, and information set forth below to receive consideration for funding. Applicants should not assume prior knowledge on the part of

NRCS or others as to the relative merits of the project described in their application.

Applicants must submit only one original copy of the application in the following format:

- Each page must be on numbered 8½” x 11” white paper that has one-inch margins; and
- The text of the application must be typed single spaced in a font no smaller than 12-point.

Applications that fail to comply with the required content and format will not be considered for funding. If submitting applications for more than one project, submit a separate application for each project. Material exceeding stated page limits will not be considered.

1. **Application Form:** (Standard Form 424 Application for Federal Assistance) Applicants must use this document as the cover sheet for each project application. Standard Form 424 can be downloaded from [Grants.gov - Forms Repository](http://www.grants.gov).
2. **Project Summary:** (Three (3)-page maximum.) Applicants must submit a description including the information below:
  - a. Project title;
  - b. Primary area for consideration (refer to page 3) and why;
  - c. Project duration (anticipated project start date of September 1, 2014, not to exceed three years);
  - d. Project director name, and contact information (including email);
  - e. Names and affiliations of project collaborators;
  - f. Project background (describe the issue or problem and how the project addresses it innovatively as defined in Section I.C. - one paragraph)
  - g. Project objectives (purpose and goals);
  - h. Project methods (methodology, tools, and processes)
  - i. Project area/location;
  - j. Project deliverables/products; and
  - k. Description of EQIP eligible producer involvement. Applicants must include a statement indicating that the proposed project will involve EQIP eligible producers and describe and certify their level of involvement in the project. Projects that do not involve EQIP eligible producers are ineligible for a CIG award.
3. **Budget Information:** (Standard Form 424A Budget Information Non-Construction Programs).
  - a. Fill in all spaces as appropriate. Section B, Item 6, column 1 should reflect the NRCS funds and Column 2 should reflect the cost share. Applicants must prepare this document to identify budget needs. The SF-424A is available at: [Grants.gov - Forms Repository](http://www.grants.gov)

- b. (One (1)-page maximum.) A narrative describing the budget needs and justifying why the budget is appropriate should also be included.

**Note:** Please note that we understand these are preliminary figures at this point. If the application is approved for full submission there may be differences once the full details of the budget are developed. Please include \$3,000 in the project budget for grantee's travel to NRCS designated events. These funds are required and can be part of the Federal portion, the cost share, or both.

### **C. How to Submit an Application**

Applicants may submit applications electronically through Grants.gov or to the email address listed. Alternatively, applications may be submitted via express mail, overnight courier service, or U.S. Postal Service to the addresses listed. Applications must contain all of the elements of a complete package and meet the requirements described. Instructions for electronically submitting the required standard forms, and instructions for adding attachments are posted on Grants.gov. Grants.gov provides date and time stamps on applications submitted through its Web site. All applications, regardless of how they are submitted, must be received by NRCS before 4:00 p.m. EST on **April 30, 2014**.

**Note:** NRCS is not responsible for any technical malfunctions or Web site problems related to Grants.gov or emailed submissions. Applicants should begin the Grants.gov process or send their email in advance of the submission deadline to avoid problems.

E-mail address: [Gregory.westfall@nj.usda.gov](mailto:Gregory.westfall@nj.usda.gov)

The address for submitting hand-delivered, regular mail, express mail or overnight courier service is:

Gregory J. Westfall  
Conservation Innovation Grants Program  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
220 Davidson Avenue, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Somerset, New Jersey 08873

**Note:** Applicants must submit only one signed original copy of each project application. Applications submitted by fax will not be considered. The use of Federal Government postage-paid envelopes, email and/or equipment in filing applications is a violation of Federal law and will disqualify you from consideration.

### **D. Due Date**

Applications must be received by 4:00 p.m. EST on **April 30, 2014**. The applicant assumes the risk of any delays in application delivery. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit completed applications early via email to ensure timely receipt by NRCS.

### **E. Acknowledgement of Submission**

NRCS will acknowledge receipt of timely applications via email. An applicant who does not receive such an email acknowledgement within 30 days of their submission, but believes he/she submitted a timely application, must contact the NRCS program contact within 30

days of submission deadline. Failure to do so will result in the application not being considered.

## **ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

CIG applicants must be a federally recognized Indian tribe, State or local unit of government, non-governmental organization, or an individual.

### **A. Matching Funds**

Selected applicants may receive CIG grants of up to 50 percent of their total project cost. CIG recipients must match the USDA funds awarded on dollar-for-dollar basis from non-Federal sources with cash and in-kind contributions. Of the applicant's required match (50%), a minimum of 25 percent of the total project cost must come from cash sources; the remaining 25 percent may come from in-kind contributions (such as equipment or project personnel).

**Matching funds must be secured at time of application.** Applications should include written verification of commitments of matching support (including both cash and in-kind contributions) from third parties. Additional information about matching funds can be found at the following link: [2 CFR 215](#).

### **B. EQIP Payment Limitation and Duplicate Payments**

Section 1240G of the Food Security Act of 1985, 16 U.S.C. 3839aa-7, imposes a \$450,000 limitation for all cost-share or incentive payments disbursed to individuals or entities under an EQIP contract between fiscal years 2008 and 2012. The limitation applies to CIG in the following manner:

- CIG funds are awarded through grant agreements. These grant agreements are not EQIP contracts; thus, CIG awards in and of themselves are not limited by the payment limitation.
- Direct or indirect payments made to an individual or entity using funds from a CIG award to carry out structural, vegetative, or management practices count toward each individual's or entity's EQIP payment limitation. Through project progress reports, CIG grantees are responsible for certifying that producers involved in CIG projects do not exceed the payment limitation. Further, all direct and indirect payments made to producers using CIG funds must be reported to the NRCS-NJ CIG program manager in the semi-annual report. Direct or indirect payments cannot be made for a practice for which the producer has already received funds, or is contracted to receive funds through any USDA programs (EQIP, Agricultural Management Assistance, Conservation Security Program, Conservation Stewardship Program, Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program, etc.) because that would be a duplicate payment.

### **C. Project Eligibility**

To be eligible for CIG, projects must involve landowners who meet the EQIP eligibility requirements as set forth in [16 USC 3839aa-1](#). Further, **all** agricultural producers receiving direct or indirect payments through participation in a CIG project must also meet the EQIP eligibility requirements. Additional information regarding EQIP eligibility requirements can be found at: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip/>. Participating producers are not required to have an EQIP contract.

A person or legal entity will not be eligible to receive any benefit during a crop, fiscal, or program year, as appropriate, if the average adjusted gross non-farm income of the person or legal entity exceeds \$900,000, unless not less than 66.66 percent of the average adjusted gross income of the person or legal entity is average adjusted gross farm income (7 CFR Part 1400). A person who is determined ineligible for USDA program benefits under the Highly Erodible Land Compliance and Wetland Compliance provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985 will not be eligible to receive direct or indirect payments through CIG.

Technologies and approaches that are eligible for funding in a project's geographic area through EQIP are ineligible for CIG funding except where the use of those technologies and approaches demonstrates clear innovation. The burden falls on the applicant to sufficiently describe the innovative features of the proposed technology or approach (applicants should reference NJ's EQIP Eligible Practices List at [www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov)).

The grantee is responsible for providing all technical assistance required to successfully implement and complete the project. NRCS-NJ will designate a Program Contact, Administrative Contact, and Technical Contact to provide oversight for each project receiving an award.

## **APPLICATION and SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

### **A. PRE-PROPOSAL**

#### **1. How to Obtain Materials**

The announcement for this CIG funding opportunity can be found on the following web sites: [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) and <http://www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/cig/index.html>.

#### **2. Content and Format**

Applications must contain the information set forth below in order to receive consideration for the full proposal phase. Applicants should not assume prior knowledge on the part of NRCS or others as to the relative merits of the project described in their application. If submitting applications for more than one project, submit a separate application for each project. Material exceeding stated page limits will not be considered.

- a. Pre-proposal Cover Sheet: (Standard Form 424 Application for Federal Assistance)  
Applicants must use this document as the cover sheet for each project application. Standard Form 424 can be downloaded from [Grants.gov - Forms Repository](http://www.grants.gov).
- b. Project Description: (Two to three pages, with a three-(3) page maximum)  
Applicants must submit a description including the information below.
  1. Project title
  2. Primary area for consideration (refer to page 3)
  3. Project duration (anticipated project start date of **September 1, 2014**)
  4. Project director name, and contact information (including e-mail)
  5. Names and affiliations of project collaborators
  6. Project purpose
  7. Project area/location
  8. Project summary
  9. Project deliverables/products

10. Description of EQIP eligible producer involvement
- c. Budget Information (Standard Form 424A Budget Information Non-Construction Programs).
  1. Fill in all spaces as appropriate. Section B, Item 6, column 1 should reflect the NRCS funds and Column 2 should reflect the cost share. If your cost share is from multiple sources you may show that in the remaining columns of Item 6. Applicants must prepare this document to identify budget needs. The SF-424A is available at: [Grants.gov - Forms Repository](http://Grants.gov - Forms Repository)
  2. A one page narrative describing the budget needs and justifying why the budget is appropriate should also be included. This is limited to a 1-page maximum.

**Note:** Please note that we understand these are preliminary figures at this point. If the application is approved for full submission there may be differences once the full details of the budget are developed.

### **3. How to Submit an Application**

Applicants may submit applications electronically through Grants.gov or to the address listed below. Alternatively, applications may be submitted in person or via express mail, overnight courier service, or U.S. Postal Service to the addresses listed below. Applications submitted e-mail must contain all of the elements of a complete package and meet the requirements described above. Applications submitted electronically E-mailed applications must be received by NRCS-NJ on or before the submission deadline of **April 30, 2014**.

**Note:** NRCS is not responsible for any technical malfunctions related e-mailed submissions. Applicants should send their e-mail in advance of the submission deadline to avoid problems.

E-mail address: [Gregory.Westfall@nj.usda.gov](mailto:Gregory.Westfall@nj.usda.gov) or [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)

The address for submitting hand-delivered, regular mail, express mail or overnight courier service applications is:

Gregory J. Westfall  
Conservation Innovation Grants Program Manager  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
220 Davidson Avenue 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Somerset NJ 08873

Applications submitted by fax will not be considered.

### **4. Due Date**

Pre-proposals must be received in NRCS-NJ State Office by 4:00 p.m. EST on **April 30, 2014**. The applicant assumes the risk of any delays in application delivery. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit completed applications via e-mail, overnight mail, or delivery service to ensure timely receipt.

## **5. Acknowledgement of Submission**

NRCS-NJ will acknowledge receipt of timely applications via e-mail. An applicant who does not receive such an e-mail acknowledgement within 30 days of their submission but believes he/she submitted a timely application must contact the NRCS-NJ program contact below within 30 days. Failure to do so will result in the application not being considered for the second phase of the application process.

CIG Program Contact:

Greg Westfall  
New Jersey CIG Program Manager  
220 Davidson Avenue 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Somerset NJ 08873  
  
Phone: (732) 537-6054  
E-mail: [Gregory.Westfall@nj.usda.gov](mailto:Gregory.Westfall@nj.usda.gov)

## **6. Withdrawal**

Applications may be withdrawn by written notice at any time before selections are made. Applications may be withdrawn by the applicant, or by an authorized representative.

## **7. Review**

Applications will be evaluated by NRCS-NJ staff under the bulleted topic identified by the applicant. Each application will be screened for completeness and compliance with the provisions of this notice, including EQIP payment limitations. Incomplete applications will be eliminated from competition and notification of elimination will be mailed to the applicant.

## **8. Anticipated Notification**

Applicants will be notified via mail by **May 12, 2014**. Applicants selected for full proposals will be required to submit a full proposal package by **June 30, 2014**.

**INFORMATION FOR FULL PROPOSALS** (only for those applicants notified at the end of the pre-proposal review process that their application has been identified for further evaluation).

### **A. FULL PROPOSAL**

All Office of Management and Budget standard forms necessary for CIG submission are posted on the following web site: [Grants.gov](http://Grants.gov) - [Forms Repository](http://Forms.Repository). An application checklist is available on the CIG Web site: <http://www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/cig/index.html>.

#### **1. Content and Format**

Applications are required to contain the content, format, and information set forth below in order to receive consideration for funding. Applicants should not assume prior knowledge on the part of NRCS-NJ or others as to the relative merits of the project described in the application. Applicants must submit one original copy of the application in the following format:

- Applications should be typewritten or printed on 8½” x 11” white paper. The text of the application should be in a font no smaller than 12-point, single-spaced, single-sided, with one-inch margins and page numbered.
- Applications that fail to comply with the required content and format will not be considered for funding.

Applications must include all required forms and narrative sections described below. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

- a. **Proposal Cover Sheet:** (Standard Form 424 Application for Federal Assistance)  
Applicants must use this document as the cover sheet for each project application. Standard Form 424 can be downloaded from [Grants.gov](http://Grants.gov) - [Forms Repository](http://Forms.Repository).
- b. **Project Description:** The description must include the following information and is limited to 12 pages in length.
  1. Project background: Describe the history of, and need for, the proposed innovation. Provide evidence that the proposed innovation has been studied sufficiently to indicate a good probability for success of the project.
  2. Project objectives: Be specific using qualitative and quantitative measures, if possible, to describe the project’s purpose and goals. Describe how the project is innovative.
  3. Project methods: Describe clearly the methodology of the project and the tools or processes that will be used to implement the project.
  4. Location and size of project or project area: Describe the location of the project and the relative size and scope (e.g., acres, farm types and demographics, etc.) of the project area. Provide a map, if possible.
  5. Producer participation: Estimate the number of producers involved in the project, and describe the extent of their involvement (all producers involved in the project must be eligible for EQIP).
  6. Project action plan and timeline: Provide a table listing project actions, timeframes, and associated milestones through project completion. Anticipated project start date of **September 1, 2014**.
  7. Project management: Give a detailed description of how the project will be organized and managed. Include a list of key project personnel and partners and their anticipated contributions to the project. Explain the level of participation required in the project by government and non-government entities. Identify who will participate in monitoring and evaluating the project.
  8. Project deliverables/products: Provide a list of specific deliverables and products that will allow NRCS to monitor project progress and payment. In addition to specific deliverable, applications must include the following activities as deliverables:
    - a. Semi-annual reports
    - b. Supplemental narratives to explain and support payment requests
    - c. Final report
    - d. Performance items specific to the project that indicate progress [A thorough list and explanation of measurable performance items specific to the project will be used in the technical evaluation (refer to “CIG Technical Evaluation Criteria”)]
    - e. New technology and innovative approach fact sheet



9. **Benefits or results expected and transferability:** Identify the results and benefits to be derived from the proposed project activities, and explain how the results will be measured. Identify project beneficiaries, i.e., agricultural producers by type, region, or sector; rural communities; and municipalities. Explain how these entities will benefit. In addition, describe how results will be communicated to others via outreach activities.
  10. **Project evaluation:** Describe the methodology or procedures to be followed to evaluate the project, determine technical feasibility, and quantify the results of the project for the final report. Grant recipients will be required to provide a semi-annual progress report, quarterly financial reports, and a final project report to NRCS-NJ. Instructions for submitting quarterly reports will be detailed in the grant agreement.
- c. **Assessment of Environmental and Social Impacts:** Describe and assess the anticipated environmental effects of the proposed project. The description of the potential environmental and social impacts must address all potential beneficial and adverse impacts of the proposed action. A full description and assessment of the potential impacts to all environmental resources must be disclosed. One line or short descriptions of environmental impacts are not acceptable. The length of the analysis should be commensurate with the complexity of the project proposed and the environmental resources impacted either directly, indirectly (later in time), or cumulatively. Where possible, information on environmental impacts should be quantified, such as number of acres of wetlands impacted, amount of carbon sequestration estimated, etc. Environmental resources include soil, water, air, plants, and animals, as well as other specific resources protected by law, Executive Order, and agency policy. These resources are outlined in the NRCS Environmental Evaluation Worksheet, form NRCS-CPA-52, which is available at: [NRCS-CPA-52](#). The NRCS-CPA-52 form can be used as a guide for the scope of environmental information that should be prepared for this section of the application. In addition to describing impacts, applicants are required to assess the significance or degree of potential environmental impact of the proposed project on environmental resources. Applicants may consult with the NRCS-NJ Environmental Liaison concerning the scope of what should be addressed in this section of the application. The Environmental Liaison for New Jersey is:

**Greg Westfall**

Resource Conservationist  
USDA NRCS  
220 Davidson Ave, 4th Floor  
Somerset, NJ 08873

Phone: (732) 537-6054

Email: [Gregory.Westfall@nj.usda.gov](mailto:Gregory.Westfall@nj.usda.gov)

Additional information on Environmental Compliance can be found on the following web site: [Environmental Liaison](#)

*Note: Please be aware that applications for projects with potentially adverse impacts may need to be modified in order to achieve acceptable and beneficial levels of environmental impact. If projects cannot be modified, there is potential that during the screening process the application may not be selected.*

- d. Budget Information:** The budget portion of the application consists of three parts described below.
1. Standard Form (SF) 424A Budget Information- Non-Construction Programs: Fill in all spaces as appropriate. Section B, Item 6, column 1 should reflect the NRCS funds and Column 2 should reflect the cost share funds. If your cost share is from multiple sources you may show that in the remaining columns of Item 6. This form is the summary budget for the project.
  2. Detailed Budget Description: Specific item by item breakdown of the totals provided in Item 6 of the SF-424A should be provided. This detail should show what individual costs were added together to arrive at the totals presented in each of Object Class Categories on the SF-424. The format of this information should be readable in 8.5 by 11 printable pages. It may be in a chart, spreadsheet, table, etc. The information needs to be presented in such a way that the evaluators and NRCS can readily understand what expenses will be incurred to support the project. The breakdown of the federal share and the applicant cost share should be shown separately as in the SF-424A, not combined. This may be on separate documents or on different sections of the same presentation. Listed below are some suggested items that should be shown in the budget details. These are suggested details and are not inclusive:
    - 6a. Personnel; A list of personnel, their salary, hourly rate, hours, % time
    - 6b. Fringe Benefits: % of salary, differing rates for different staff
    - 6c. Travel: basis for airfare, mileage rate (NTE Federal govt. rate), per diem, hotel, car rental, how many trips, how many days, number of staff
    - 6d. Equipment: type of equipment, cost per item, per batch, per load, quantity
    - 6e. Supplies: type of supplies, cost per item, per batch, per load, quantity (a general statement such as “office supplies \$3,000” is not acceptable)
    - 6f. Contractual; Cost of each subcontract – the total of all subcontracts should be shown on the SF-424, but an itemized budget should be provided for each potential subcontract. The budgets for the subcontracts should follow this same format and be submitted with your proposal.
    - 6g. Construction: N/A
    - 6h. Other: Cost per item, per batch, per load, quantity
  3. Budget Narrative: Provide a detailed narrative in support of the budget for the project, broken down by each project year. Discuss how the budget specifically supports the proposed activities. Explain how budget items are essential to achieving project objectives. Justify the project cost effectiveness and include justification for personnel and consultant salaries with a description of duties. In addition to the information above, the subcontractors and consultants must also submit a statement of work. The budget narrative should support the federal funds requested and the cost share.
- e. Indirect Costs**
- If you have a current Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Agreement you must:
- a. Submit a copy of the agreement with your application,
  - b. Calculate indirect costs based on the total Federal Funds awarded and cannot exceed 15 percent,
  - c. Requesting unrecovered indirect costs in the matching funds is not approved.

If you do **not** have a current Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Agreement you may not claim indirect costs in this application.

- f. **Matching:** Applications must include written verification of commitments of matching support (including both cash and in-kind contributions) from non-federal third parties.

#### Cash Match

For any third party cash contributions, a separate pledge agreement is required for each donation, signed by the authorized organizational representative of the donor organization and the applicant organization, which must include: (1) the name, address, and telephone number of the donor, (2) the name of the applicant organization, (3) the title of the project for which the donation is made, (4) the dollar amount of the cash donation, and (5) a statement that the donor will pay the cash contribution during the grant period.

#### In-Kind Match

"In-kind" refers to non-cash contributions of goods or services made by third party individuals or organizations to support projects. Examples of "in-kind" include work done by unpaid volunteers and donations of supplies, facilities, or equipment. In-kind contributions must be necessary to accomplish program activities and are verifiable. For any third party in-kind contributions, a separate pledge agreement is required for each contribution, signed by the authorized organizational representatives of the donor organization and the applicant organization, which must include: (1) the name, address, and telephone number of the donor, (2) the name of the applicant's organization, (3) the title of the project for which the donation is made, (4) a good faith estimate of the current fair market value of the third party in-kind contribution, and (5) a statement that the donor will make the contribution during the grant period.

The sources and amounts of all matching support from outside the applicant institution must be summarized on a separate page and placed in the application immediately following the summary of matching support (matching support means a budget narrative broken down by year).

The value of applicant contributions to the project will be established in accordance with the applicable cost principles. Applicants should refer to OMB Circulars, Cost Principles that apply to their entity for additional guidance, and other requirements relating to matching and allowable costs.

- g. **Declaration of Previous CIG Projects Involvement:** Identify any previously awarded CIG projects involvement related to this proposal and any of its principal investigators. Detail the purpose, outcomes to date, and how this new proposal relates to the previous award.
- h. **Certifications:** Standard Form (SF) 424B - Assurances, Non-construction Programs. All applications must include this document. The SF-424B may be found at: Grants.gov - Forms Repository or by contacting the State office. Applicants, by signing and submitting an application, assure and certify that they are in compliance with the following from 7 CFR:

- a. Part 3017, Government wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-procurement)
- b. Part 3018, New Restrictions on Lobbying
- c. Part 3021, Government wide Requirements for Drug Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)
- i. **DUNS Number:** A Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number is a unique nine-digit sequence recognized as the universal standard for identifying and keeping track of over 70 million businesses worldwide. CIG applicants must obtain a DUNS Number. Information on how to obtain a DUNS number can be found at: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform> or by calling 1-866-705-5711. Please note that the registration may take up to 14 business days to complete.
- j. **Central Contractor Registry (CCR) Registration:** The CCR is a database that serves as the primary government repository for contractor information required for the conduct of business with the government. This database is also used as a central location for maintaining organizational information for organizations seeking and receiving grants from the government. CIG applicants must register with the CCR. To register, go to: <http://www.ccr.gov>. Allow a minimum of 5 days to complete the CCR registration.

## 2. How to Submit an Application

Applicants may submit applications to [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) or to the e-mail address listed below. Alternatively, applications may be submitted in person or via express mail, overnight courier service, or U.S. Postal Service to the addresses listed below. Applications submitted by e-mail must contain all of the elements of a complete package and meet the requirements described above. All applications must be received by the closing date of **June 30, 2014**.

Note: NRCS is not responsible for any technical malfunctions related to e-mailed submissions. Applicants should send their e-mail in advance of the submission deadline to avoid problems.

E-mail address: [Gregory.Westfall@nj.usda.gov](mailto:Gregory.Westfall@nj.usda.gov) or [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)

The address for submitting hand-delivered, regular mail, express mail or overnight courier service applications is:

Gregory Westfall  
Conservation Innovation Grants Program Manager  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
220 Davidson Avenue 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Somerset NJ 08873

Note: Applicants must submit one signed original copy of each project application. This includes applications submitted via e-mail. Applications submitted by email must send copies of the original signatures with a postmark no later than **June 30, 2014**. Applications submitted by fax will not be considered.

### **3. Due Date**

Applications must be received at the NRCS-NJ State Office by 4:00 p.m. EST on **June 30, 2014**. The applicant assumes the risk of any delays in application delivery. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit completed applications via e-mail, overnight mail, or delivery service to ensure timely receipt.

### **4. Acknowledgement of Submission**

NRCS-NJ will acknowledge receipt of timely applications via e-mail. An applicant who does not receive such an e-mail acknowledgement within 30 days of their submission but believes he/she submitted a timely application must contact the NRCS-NJ program contact below within 30 days. Failure to do so will result in the application not being considered for the second phase of the application process.

CIG Program Contact:

Greg Westfall  
NRCS-NJ CIG Program Manager  
220 Davidson Avenue 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Somerset NJ 08873

Phone: (732) 537-6054

Fax: (855) 305-7157

E-mail: [Gregory.Westfall@nj.usda.gov](mailto:Gregory.Westfall@nj.usda.gov)

### **5. Withdrawal**

Applications may be withdrawn by written notice at any time before selections are made. Applications may be withdrawn by the applicant, or by an authorized representative.

### **6. Funding Restrictions**

Awardees may not use unrecovered indirect costs as part of their matching funds.

CIG funds may not be used to pay any of the following costs unless otherwise permitted by law, or approved in writing by the Authorized Departmental Officer in advance of incurring such costs:

- a. Costs above the amount of funds authorized for the project;
- b. Costs incurred prior to the effective date of the grant;
- c. Costs which lie outside the scope of the approved project and any amendments thereto;
- d. Entertainment costs, regardless of their apparent relationship to project objectives;
- e. Compensation for injuries to persons, or damage to property arising out of project activities;
- f. Consulting services performed by a Federal employee during official duty hours when such consulting services result in the payment of additional compensation to the employee; and,
- g. Renovation or refurbishment of research or related spaces; the purchase or installation of fixed equipment in such spaces; and the planning, repair, rehabilitation, acquisition, or construction of buildings or facilities.

This list is not exhaustive. Questions regarding the allowances of particular items of cost should be directed to the administrative contact person.

## **7. Review**

Applications will be screened for completeness and compliance with the provisions of this notice. Incomplete applications will be eliminated from competition, and notification of elimination will be mailed to the applicant. Complete applications will be evaluated by a technical peer review panel based on the Criteria for Application Evaluation identified in the application instructions in section VI.B.

Applications with technically-based recommendations from the peer review groups will be forwarded to the State Technical Committee.

## **8. Patents and Inventions**

Allocation of rights to patents and inventions shall be in accordance with USDA regulation 7 CFR §3019.36 and 7 CFR §3019.2. USDA receives a royalty-free license for Federal Government use, reserves the right to require the patentee to license others in certain circumstances, and requires that anyone exclusively licensed to sell the invention in the United States must normally manufacture it domestically.

## **9. Environmental Review Requirements**

The Council on Environmental Quality's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations at 40 CFR parts 1500-1508 and the NRCS regulation that implements NEPA at 7 CFR part 650 require that an environmental review be prepared for actions where the agency has discretion and control. Accordingly, NRCS financial assistance under the CIG program requires compliance with these regulations. As part of the application packet, applicants are required to provide environmental information pertaining to their project to help NRCS determine the appropriate documentation required to comply with NEPA and NRCS regulations. If the application is selected for funding, the NRCS-NJ Program Contact and NRCS-NJ Environmental Liaison will coordinate with the selected applicant concerning documentation for compliance with NEPA. The selected applicant will be required to prepare and pay for the preparation of the appropriate NEPA document (e.g., Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement if required for NEPA compliance). Grant funding cannot be approved until the environmental review requirements demonstrating compliance with NEPA are met.

## **APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

### **A. Review and Selection Process**

There are two steps in evaluating full CIG proposals. Proposals will be reviewed by a Technical Peer Review Panel. The Technical Peer Review Panel consists of NRCS-NJ technical specialists, and technical specialists from other appropriately related Federal agencies, and non-Federal agencies. Applications will be reviewed based on the CIG Technical Evaluation Criteria listed in Part VI.B below.

The Technical Peer Review Panel will forward recommendations to the State Conservationist for final review and selection.

## **B. Criteria for Application Evaluation**

Peer review panels will use the following criteria to evaluate project proposals:

### **Purpose, Approach, and Goals**

- Design and implementation of project based on sound methodology and demonstrated technology.
- Promotes environmental enhancement and protection in conjunction with agricultural production.
- Project outcome is clearly measurable.
- Potential for successful completion.
- Both beneficial and adverse impacts are considered and an acceptably significant level of improvement will be achieved.

### **Innovative Technology or Approach**

- Project is innovative (national, regionally, and local in nature).
- Project conforms to description of innovative projects or activities in proposal request announcement.

### **Project Management**

- Timeline and milestones are clear and reasonable.
- Project staff has technical expertise needed.
- Budget is adequately explained and justified.
- Experience and capacity to partner with and gain the support of other organizations, institutions and agencies.

### **Transferability**

- Potential for producers and landowners to use the innovative technologies or approaches.
- Potential to transfer the approach or technology nationally or to a broader audience or other geographic or socio-economic areas, including limited resource, socially disadvantaged and other traditionally underserved producers and communities.
- Potential for NRCS to successfully use the innovative approach or methods.
- Project will result in the development of technical or related technology transfer materials (technical standards, technical notes, guide sheets, handbooks, software, etc.).

## **C. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates**

CIG selections are anticipated to be announced by **July 28, 2014**; all agreements are expected to be awarded by **September 1, 2014**. Funds are not awarded, and work may not start until an agreement is signed by both NRCS-NJ and the grantee.

Applicants should plan their projects based on a project start date of **September 1, 2014**.

## **AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

### **A. Award Notification**

Applicants who have been selected for funding will receive a letter of official notification from the NRCS-NJ State Conservationist. However, all selections are contingent upon successful completion of the environmental review process and financial review.

**B. Environmental Review Requirements**

Upon notification of selection, the applicant must contact the NRCS-NJ Environmental Liaison to determine the scope and level of NEPA documentation required for the project. The environmental documentation prepared to meet NEPA requirements must be prepared prior to award of grant funds.

Selected applicants may be required to prepare and pay for the preparation of the appropriate NEPA document(s) if an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement is needed. Grant funds cannot be awarded until the environmental review requirements demonstrating compliance with NEPA are met. A list of the NRCS Environmental Liaisons can be found at the following Web address: [Environmental Liaison](#).

**I. AGENCY CONTACTS**

CIG Program Contact:

Greg Westfall  
NRCS-NJ CIG Program Manager  
220 Davidson Avenue 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Somerset NJ 08873  
  
Phone: (732) 537-6054  
Fax: (855) 305-7157  
E-mail: [Gregory.Westfall@nj.usda.gov](mailto:Gregory.Westfall@nj.usda.gov)

CIG Administrative Contact:

Carol Parker  
NRCS-NJ State Administrative Officer  
220 Davidson Avenue 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Somerset NJ 08873  
  
Phone: (732) 537-6081  
E-mail: [Carol.Parker@nj.usda.gov](mailto:Carol.Parker@nj.usda.gov)

Additional information about CIG, including fact sheets and frequently asked questions, is available on the CIG web page at: <http://www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/cig/index.html>

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ in Somerset, NJ.

Carrie Mosley  
State Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service, New Jersey

Attachments



## 2. OTHER INFORMATION

**Important: Applications Missing Any of These Required Items Will Not Be Considered**

**CONSERVATION INNOVATION GRANTS  
NEW JERSEY COMPETITION  
FISCAL YEAR 2014 PRE-PROPOSAL PACKAGE CHECK LIST**

- A. Pre-proposal Cover Sheet:** Submit Standard Form 424 Application for Federal Assistance
- B. Project Description:** Submit a description including the information below (Three (3) pages maximum in length).
  1. Project title
  2. Primary area for consideration (refer to page 3)
  3. Project duration
  4. Project director name, and contact information (including e-mail)
  5. Names and affiliations of project collaborators
  6. Project purpose
  7. Project area/location
  8. Project summary
  9. Project deliverables/products
  10. Description of EQIP eligible producer involvement
- C. Budget Information:** Submit Standard Form 424A Budget Information Non-Construction Programs.
  1. Complete SF-424A
  2. One page narrative

**CONSERVATION INNOVATION GRANTS  
NEW JERSEY COMPETITION  
FISCAL YEAR 2014 FULL APPLICATION PACKAGE CHECK LIST**

- A. Proposal Cover Sheet:** Submit Standard Form 424 Application for Federal Assistance
- B. Project Description:** (12 pages maximum, single-spaced, single-sided, 12 point font)
  - 1. Project background
  - 2. Project objectives
  - 3. Project methods
  - 4. Location and size of project area (include a map if possible)
  - 5. Producer participation
  - 6. Project action plan and timeline
  - 7. Project management
  - 8. Project deliverables/products
  - 9. Benefits or results expected and transferability
  - 10. Project evaluation
- C. Assessment of Environmental and Social Impacts**
- D. Budget Information:** Submit a completed Standard Form 424A (SF-424A) Budget Information-Non-Construction Programs.
  - 1. Complete SF-424A
  - 2. Detailed budget description
  - 3. Budget narrative
- E. Indirect Cost:** If including indirect cost in your budget, submit a copy of your Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Agreement
- F. Matching Information**
- G. Declaration of Previous CIG Projects Involvement.**
- H. Certifications:** Complete Standard Form 424B (SF-424B) Assurances-Non-Construction Programs.
- I. DUNS Number:** For information about how to obtain a DUNS number, go to <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform> or call 1-866-705-5711. Please note that the registration may take up to 14 business days to complete.
- J. Central Contractor Registry (CCR):** To register, visit [www.ccr.gov](http://www.ccr.gov). Allow a minimum of 5 days to complete the CCR registration.

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To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call toll-free at (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal-relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal-relay).  
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