Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Ranking Instructions – FY2012

The following National Issue instructions apply to all EQIP funding pools.

Note: ONLY financially assisted conservation practices will be considered during the application ranking.

Efficiency Score:

The Efficiency Score considers the benefits of the cost efficiency of the conservation practice during the evaluation of the applications for funding. This score is generated in the inner-workings or conservation databases and is generated automatically. The Efficiency Score takes values from the CPPE (Conservation Practice Physical Effects) and cost information from the Practice Average Cost Tables in SmartTech. The score evaluates the effect of the financially assisted conservation practice in solving resource concerns.

National Priorities Addressed:

1. Clean and Abundant Water: Water Quality - Will the proposed project assist the producer to:
1a. Meet regulatory requirements relating to animal feeding operations, or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?

1b. Reduce sediment, nutrients or pesticides from agricultural operations located within a field that adjoins a designated impaired water body.
Points will be awarded if the application acreage adjoins a TMDL priority waterbody in the Clean Water Act Sec. 303(d) list, a "Save our Lakes" waterbody, or a wellhead protection area. Wellhead Protection Area Maps are available in Section 1 of the Field Office Technical Guide (hard copy). Refer to the "Save our Lakes" excel spreadsheet that was provided to you. The 303(d) map overlays for streams and lakes are available for field office use. They are located at f:geodata\hydrography. Choose either tmdl_streams_l_2008_z(appropriate utm zone).shp or tmdl_lakes_a_2008_z(appropriate utm zone).shp. These maps may be used as an overlay on the conservation plan map in ArcGIS to determine if the EQIP application meets the criteria.

1c. Reduce sediment, nutrients or pesticides from agricultural operations located within a field that adjoins a water body?
Points shall be awarded if the EQIP application is adjacent to a water body and contains practices that will have a positive impact on water quality, either ground or surface water. This question will be "Yes" for applications applying under the Animal Feeding Operations (AFO) statewide resource concern. Points are restricted to the practices listed: 102 CNMP, 313, 329, 340, 345, 351, 442 (only when converting from flood to pivot), 512, 550, 590, 595, 603, and/or 610.

2. Clean and Abundant Water: Water Conservation - Will the proposed project assist the producer to:
2a. Increase groundwater recharge in identified groundwater depletion areas (http://water.usgs.gov/ogw/rasa/html/TOC.html)?
There are no designated depleted aquifers in ND. This question is NA in ND

2b. Conserve water from irrigation system improvements and result in estimated water savings of at least 5% and saved water will be available for other beneficial uses?
This criterion is not applicable to EQIP applications in North Dakota. This will always be answered "no".

2c. Conserve water in an area where the applicant participates in a geographically established or watershed-wide project?
Points will be awarded when the applicant participates in an active EPA-319 sponsored watershed project **AND** applies for water conservation practices within the EQIP application. The list of practices are: 118, 329, 340, 345, 511, 442, 449, 512, 528, 550, 574, and 657.

3. Clean Air: Treatment of Air Quality from Agricultural Sources - Will the proposed project assist the producer to:
3a. Meet regulatory requirements relating to air quality or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?
This criterion is not applicable to EQIP applications in North Dakota, since there are currently no air regulations that apply. This will always be answered "no".

3b. Reduce green house gases such as methane, nitrous oxide, and volatile organic compounds (VOC)?
This question will rarely be checked as "Yes." Examples may include reducing horsepower of an irrigation pumping station or the conversion of a diesel or gas motor to an electric/solar motor.

3c. Increase carbon sequestration?
Points are awarded when the practices that sequester carbon are part of the application (328, *329, 340, 342, 345, 380, 386, 391, 393, 472, 512, 528 incentive, 550, 612, 650 or 657)*. Points are restricted to the practices listed.

4. High Quality, Productive Soils, Erosion Reduction - Will the proposed project assist the producer to:
4a. Reduce erosion to tolerable limits (Soil "T")?
Points will be awarded when the EQIP application includes practices that will conserve soil resources on land that has an estimated benchmark soil loss greater than the tolerable soil loss (T) and a planned soil loss of (T) or less. Points are restricted to the practices listed: 328, 329, 332, 340, 345, 412, 512, 603, 550, 342, and/ or 610. Only select this question as "Yes" if an erosion reduction will be achieved with contracted practice(s). For example: if 340 will be a new practice but T was already achieved do not select "Yes".

5. Healthy Plant and Animal Communities Wildlife Habitat Conservation - Will the proposed project assist the producer to:
5a. Benefit threatened and endangered, at-risk, candidate, or species of concern as identified in a State wildlife plan?
Points will be awarded if the practices included in the EQIP application will result in protection, restoration, development, or enhancement of grasslands (native or introduced) and/or wetlands for Level 1 Species Habitat. Points are restricted to the practices listed: 382 (cross fence, not protective fence) 390, 511 (645 criteria), 512, 516, 528 incentive, 533, 550, 614, 642, 643, 657, 658, and/or 659.

5b. Retain wildlife and plant benefits on land exiting the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)?
Points shall be awarded if the EQIP application includes new practices that will allow the applicant to utilize the permanent vegetation on land that will expire in the next year or has expired from CRP within the last 2 years and has not already been converted to cropland. Practices might include water developments, fencing, and forage harvest management.

6. High Quality, Productive Soils, Healthy Plant and Animal Communities: Special Environmental Efforts/Initiatives – Will the proposed project assist the producer to:
6a. Eradicate or control noxious or invasive species?
Points will be awarded when the EQIP application includes practices that will benefit pest management or invasive species management. The intent of the question is to address noxious or invasive species. Therefore, noxious or invasive species must be present, identified and addressed through the conservation practice. Points are restricted to the practices listed: 328, 329, 340, 345, 500 (Invasive species scenario), 511, 528 incentive, 595, and/or 643.

6b. Increase, improve or establish pollinator habitat?
Points are awarded if any of the following financially assisted practice(s) are applied: *386 (Pollinator Scenarios), 390 (Pollinator Scenarios), 550, 643 (Pollinator Scenarios)*.

6c. Implement precision agricultural methods?
Points will be awarded for 590 (Variable Rate scenario), 595 (Precision scenario) these are the only eligible practices for this question

6d. Properly dispose of animal carcasses?
Points will be awarded when the EQIP application includes practices that will benefit animal carcass management. Points are restricted to the practices listed: 102 CNMP, 313, or 317.

6e. Implement an Integrated Pest Management plan?
Points will be awarded when the applicant chooses 595.

7. Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy Production - Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy Production -Will the proposed project assist the producer to:
7a. Reduce energy consumption on the agricultural operation?
Points will be awarded if the practices included in the EQIP application will result in energy conservation benefits being realized. Points are restricted to the practices listed: 329, 345, 380, 442 (irrigation conversions), 533 (VFD, windmills or solar panels), 590, and/or 595.

7b. Increase on-farm energy efficiency with more efficient equipment? 533(VFD, windmill, and solar scenarios only), 590 (Variable Rate), 595.

7c. Assist in producing energy from renewable resources (solar, wind, biofuel, etc)? 533 (windmill and solar scenarios only)

8. Business Lines – Conservation Implementation Additional Ranking Considerations - Will the proposed project result in:
8a. Implementation of all planned conservation practices within three years of contract obligation?
Points will be awarded when the applicant chooses to schedule all financially assisted practices within 36 months of estimated date of contract obligation.

8b. Improvement of existing conservation practices or conservation systems already in place at the time the application is accepted, or will complete an existing conservation system?
Points will be awarded if the planned financially assisted practices will aid in accomplishing a conservation system that the applicant is adopting. If the application will implement practices that are increasing the level of conservation and working towards an RMS, then you would answer yes.

9. Does the applicant meet the following conditions:
9a. If the applicant has an existing EQIP contract, has it been, and is it now, on schedule and in full compliance?
Points will be awarded if the applicant has an existing EQIP contract in which a contract item has not been rescheduled more than one time AND the contract holder has no additional contract compliance issues.

9b. Did the applicant successfully complete any past contract(s) in full compliance?
Points will be awarded if the applicant had an EQIP(s) that did not have contract items rescheduled more than once AND did not have any additional contract compliance issues.

9c. Is this the applicant's first EQIP application?
Points will be awarded if the applicant's previous applications have never been funded. The intent of the question is to award points to those applicants that have never had a contract before regardless of whether they have applied before or not.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Ranking Instructions – FY2012 Local Work Group (LWG)

An EQIP application will be ranked and compete within the LWG drawing account when it does not specifically address the resource concerns targeted by the Statewide funding pools. An applicant may only provide one Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 EQIP application per operating unit per funding pool.
When the land within the application consists of both cropland and grassland, the application will compete in the funding pool of the predominant contracted land use.

Note: ONLY financially assisted conservation practices will be considered during the application ranking

State Issues Addressed:

1. Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance for a practice(s) that will adjust application amounts and/or timing of organic/inorganic fertilizers according to soil test?
Points are awarded when the application includes 590 Nutrient Management.

2. Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance for a practice(s) that will reduce animal wastes that impact water quality?
Points shall be awarded when the practices planned for installation will reduce animal waste's impact on water quality. For example, practices may include the organic component of Nutrient Management (590), Waste Utilization (633), etc.

3. Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance for a practice(s) for improved quality of livestock drinking water? (516, 614, 642, 574) Points are awarded when the application includes a financially assisted practice that will improve the quality of livestock drinking water. Points are restricted to the practices listed.

4. Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance for a practice(s) that will mitigate the potential environmental risk of pest management control measures? Points are awarded when the application includes 595 Pest Management.

5. Will the EQIP application provide financial assistance for a practice(s) which will reduce erosion on cropland fields? (328, 329, 340, 342, 345, 380, 386, 393, 412, 512, 550, and/or 603) Points are restricted to the practices listed when they will provide ADDITIONAL erosion control to system.

6. Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance for a practice(s) that will address saline seeps, recharge areas, and/or saline/sodic soils? (340, 386, 512, 550, 610) Points shall be awarded if the implementation of new practices will address the problems of saline seeps and the recharge area, or the practices will return cropped acres of saline soils to salt tolerant vegetation. Points are restricted to the practices listed.

7. Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance for a practice(s) that will reduce the number of tillage operations? (329, 340, 345, 512, 550) Points are awarded when the new practices to be implemented in the application will reduce the number of tillage operations that the participant generally performs. Points are restricted to the practices listed. Note: In regard to 340 Cover Crops – only select this question as "Yes" if a reduction in tillage will truly be achieved. For example, producer practices fall tillage and by implementing cover crops he/she will no longer perform fall tillage.

*8. Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance for the implementation of the **organic** component of 590 Nutrient Management?* Points shall be awarded when organic materials are used in nutrient management.

9. Will the EQIP application provide financial assistance for a practice(s) to facilitate grazing distribution? Points shall be awarded when the practice(s) to be applied in this application result in improved grazing distribution. Practices such as 528 incentive, 642, 614, 382, or 516 could have this desired result.

10. Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance for a practice(s) that will convert cropland to introduced and/or native herbaceous vegetation? (512, 550) Points shall be awarded when the EQIP application includes introduced or native herbaceous planting on cropland (512 or 550). Points are restricted to the practices listed.

Choose only one of the following questions, either 11 or 12. Points are awarded according to the planned practices that will improve STIR.

> 11*. Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance to achieve STIR of less than 9.0? (329)* "Yes" will be checked if the **planned** EQIP practices will provide a STIR of less than 9.0 according to RUSL2 calculator. Points are restricted to the practices listed.
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> *12. Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance to achieve a STIR of 9.0 to 30.0? (329)* "Yes" will be checked if the **planned** EQIP practices will provide a STIR of 9.0 to 30 according to RUSL2 calculator. Points are restricted to the practices listed.

Choose only one of the following questions, either 13 or 14.

> *13. Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance for a practice(s) which assists in rotating a single herd through 3-6 pastures?* Points shall be awarded when the applicant's current or future grazing system schedules a single herd of livestock to rotate through 3 to 6 pastures per grazing season. This determination shall be documented in the grazing system included in the conservation plan that accompanies the EQIP application or contract.
>
> *14. Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance for a practice(s) which assists in rotating a single herd through 7 or more pastures?* Points shall be awarded when the applicant's current or future grazing system schedules a single herd of livestock to rotate through 7 or more pastures per grazing season. This determination shall be documented in the grazing system included in the conservation plan that accompanies the EQIP application or contract.

Choose only one of the following questions, either 15, 16, or 17.

> 15. *Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance for a practice which assists in financial assistance for 356-Dike within 5 miles of Devils Lake or the Red, James or Sheyenne Rivers?*
>
> *16. Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance for a practice which assists in financial assistance for 356-Dike between 5-10 miles of Devils Lake or the Red, James or Sheyenne Rivers?*
>
> *17. Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance for a practice which assists in financial assistance for 356-Dike greater than 10 miles of Devils Lake or the Red, James or Sheyenne Rivers?* All EQIP applications with 356-Dike greater than 10 miles from Devils Lake or the Red, James or Sheyenne Rivers would receive these points

Local Issues Addressed:

Each Local Work Group (LWG) has selected five local ranking criteria to prioritize applications to meet local resource concerns. The criteria has been reviewed and approved for use by the State Conservationist.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Ranking Instructions – FY2012 Animal Feeding Operations (AFO)

An EQIP application will be ranked and compete within the AFO Statewide Funding Pool when it addresses the proper handling of animal wastes. The application must include a financial assistance request for 313 Waste Storage Facility or 102 CNMP Incentive. The applicant must agree to implement a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) in conjunction with the ag waste system. An applicant may only provide one FY 2012 EQIP application per operating unit per funding pool.

Note: ONLY financially assisted conservation practices will be considered during the application ranking.

Screening Tool:

Prior to ranking the application, EQIP AFO applications will be "screened" for funding priority. This Screening Tool will set priorities for AFO funding opportunities for FY12. The priority for each AFO application will be populated in ProTracts.

Applications that provide financial assistance for **only** a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) will be considered "**High**" priority and will have first opportunity for funding.

"**Medium**" priority shall be assigned to applications that request financial assistance for an ag waste facility for an existing animal feeding operation.

"**Low**" priority shall be assigned to applications that request financial assistance for an ag waste facility for a facility with an operational permit or new animal feeding operation.

In situations where it is difficult to determine if the facility is an expansion of a current facility or the application will assist in the development of a facility in a new or existing location, the determination will be based on the amount of permits that will be required by the NDSHD. If the NDSHD determines there is a need for one permit, it is an expansion. If two, the application receives a new or existing designation.

State Issues Addressed:

1. Is the facility frequently flooded (at least once every 5 years)? Check yes if the facility is flooded at least once every five years. This is an observation based on local knowledge.

2. Will the EQIP application provide financial assistance for a practice(s) to facilitate grazing distribution? Points shall be awarded when the practice(s) to be applied in this application result in improved grazing distribution. Practices such as Water Wells (642), Water Tanks (614), Fencing (382), or Livestock Water Pipelines (516) could have this desired result.

3. Will the EQIP application provide financial assistance for a practice(s) which will reduce erosion on cropland fields? (328, 329, 340, 342, 345, 380, 386, 393, 412, 512, 550, and/or 603) Points are restricted to the practices listed in this ranking question.

Questions 4, 5, and 6:
Identify the location of the livestock feeding operation on a USGS Quad topographic map. Measure the distance from the feeding operation location to the nearest **solid** blue line stream symbol, or waterbody identified by a blue basin color or the blue marsh symbol. If the topographic feature is blue or purple, it is a waterbody or stream and points will be awarded. Only one of the questions 4, 5, 6 can be answered "yes."

Choose only one of the following questions, either 4, 5, or 6.

> *4. According to the topo map, is the facility within 1/4 mile of a solid "blue line" stream or waterbody?*
>
> *5. According to the topo map, is the facility between 1/4 and 1/2 mile of a solid "blue line" stream or waterbody?*
>
> *6. According to the topo map, is the facility between 1/2 and 1 mile of a solid "blue line" stream or waterbody?*

Questions 7, 8, and 9:
Using the applicant's well log, the North Dakota Geological Survey County Geological and Ground Water Resource Studies books, or producer observations determine the depth to groundwater at the feeding location. The points are awarded based on the depth range. Only one of the questions 7, 8 or 9 can be answered "Yes."

Choose only one of the following questions, either 7, 8, or 9

> *7. Is the depth to an aquifer or groundwater within 10 feet?*
>
> *8. Is the depth to an aquifer or groundwater between 11 and 25 feet?*
>
> *9. Is the depth to an aquifer or groundwater between 26 and 50 feet?*

Questions 10, 11, and 12
Using the web soil survey or Toolkit/ArcGis, determine the predominant soil mapping unit underlying the facility. Then using the Soil Data Mart (SDM), determine the Saturated Hydraulic Conductivity (Ksat) of soil layer having the least Ksat. SDM is found at http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov/default.aspx in the report entitled "Physical Soil Properties." Only one of the questions 10, 11, or 12 can be answered "yes."

Choose only one of the following questions, either 10, 11, or 12

> *10. Is the Ksat of the least permeable soil layer of the map unit underlying the facility greater than 10 um/s (micrometers per second)?*
>
> *11. Is the Ksat of the least permeable soil layer of the map unit underlying the facility between 1 and 10 um/s (micrometers per second)?*
>
> *12. Is the Ksat of the least permeable soil layer of the map unit underlying the facility between less than 1 um/s (micrometers per second)?*

Example: Use the web soil survey or ArcGIS to determine the dominant soil type under the ag waste facility (e.g., 33B). Then go into soil data mart and look for the "Physical Soil Properties" report for that given soil (33B). Under saturated hydraulic conductivity, for the given soil (33B), look for the least permeable soil layer OR the smallest range of numbers (0.10 – 10.00). When looking at this range of numbers, 0.10 – 10.00, look at the high end of the range which is the least permeable soil layers greatest

potential to release water or leach nutrients. In this case it is 10.00; use this number to answer AFO ranking questions 14-16. For example, answer yes to AFO ranking question 15.

Map symbol and soil name	Depth	Sand	Silt	Clay	Moist bulk density	Saturated hydraulic conductivity
	In	*Pct*	*Pct*	*Pct*	*g/cc*	*micro m/sec*
33B:						
Savage	0-7	—	—	27-35	1.00-1.30	1.00-10.00
	7-25	—	—	35-50	1.25-1.50	0.10-10.00
	25-51	—	—	27-45	1.30-1.50	0.10-10.00
	51-80	—	—	35-45	1.30-1.50	0.10-10.00

Choose only one of the following questions, either 13 or 14.

13. Does the facility meet EPA's definition of a small Animal Feeding Operation (AFO)?
An AFO is a lot or facility (other than an aquatic animal production facility) where the following conditions are met: Animals (other than aquatic animals) have been, are, or will be stabled or confined and fed or maintained for a total of 45 days or more in any 12-month period, and crops, vegetation, forage growth, or post-harvest residues are not sustained in the normal growing season over any portion of the lot or facility.

14. Does the facility meet EPA's definition of a Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO)?
Large Confined Animal Feeding Operation (Large CAFO), an AFO, is defined as a Large CAFO if it stables or confines greater than or equal to the number of animals specified in any of the following categories: 700 mature dairy cows, whether milked or dry; 1,000 veal calves; or 1,000 cattle other than mature dairy cows or veal calves. Cattle includes, but is not limited to, heifers, steers, bulls, and cow/calf pairs; 2,500 swine, each weighing 55 pounds or more; 10,000 swine, each weighing less than 55 pounds; 500 horses; 10,000 sheep or lambs; 55,000 turkeys; 30,000 laying hens or broilers, if the AFO uses a liquid manure handling system; 125,000 chickens (other than laying hens), if the AFO uses other than a liquid manure handling system; 82,000 laying hens, if the AFO uses other than a liquid manure handling system; 30,000 ducks, if the AFO uses other than a liquid manure handling system; or 5,000 ducks, if the AFO uses a liquid manure handling system.

Choose only one of the following questions, either 15, 16, or 17.

Points are awarded according to the distance to urban development. Urban development is defined as a location where home density exceeds 4 permanent houses (not campers) on 40 acres. Only one of the questions 16, 17, or 18 can be answered “Yes.” Neither question will be selected if the facility is further than 1 mile.

15. Is the facility within 1/4 mile of urban development (density of at least 4 houses per 40 acres)?

16. Is the facility within 1/4 to 1/2 mile of urban development (density of at least 4 houses per 40 acres)?

17. Is the facility within 1/2 to 1 mile of urban development (density of at least 4 houses per 40 acres)?

Local Issues Addressed:

If applicable, choose only one of the following questions, either 1, 2, or 3.

1. Does the applicant currently possess an unimplemented CNMP, completed preliminary design, or is applying for practice code 102 CNMP? Points shall be awarded if the applicant currently possesses an unimplemented CNMP, has a completed preliminary design for their animal feeding operation in hand and is ready for structural implementation, or is applying for practice code 102 in this application.

2. Does the EQIP application request financial assistance for implementation of an ag waste systems of an existing animal feeding operation (no expansion planned)? Points will be awarded when the application requests financial assistance for an ag waste system where there is not an AUM expansion planned.

3. Does the EQIP application request financial assistance for implementation of an ag waste systems of an expanding animal feeding operation that does not have an operational agricultural waste system? Points will be awarded when the application requests financial assistance for an ag waste system where an AUM expansion is planned and the current system will not meet permitting requirements.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Ranking Instructions - FY2012 Forestry/ Living Snow Fence

An EQIP application will be ranked and compete within the Forestry/Living Snow Fence/Energy Statewide Funding Pool when it includes a financial assistance request for 650 Windbreak Renovation, 666 Forest Stand Improvement, 394 Firebreak ("Firewise" Assessment), 380 Windbreak Establishment, and 612 Tree and Shrub Establishment. This funding pool will be used when the primary resource concern to be addressed with the application is forestry. An applicant may only provide one FY 2012 EQIP application per operating unit per funding pool.

Note: ONLY financially assisted conservation practices will be considered during the application ranking

State Issues Addressed:

1. Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance for a practice(s) that will adjust application amounts and/or timing of organic/inorganic fertilizers according to soil test?
Points are awarded when the application includes 590 Nutrient Management.

2. Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance for a practice(s) that will reduce animal wastes that impact water quality?
Points shall be awarded when the practices planned for installation will reduce animal waste's impact on water quality. For example, practices may include the organic component of Nutrient Management (590), Waste Utilization (633), etc.

3. Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance for a practice(s) for improved quality of livestock drinking water? (516, 614, 642) Points are awarded when the application includes a financially assisted practice that will improve the quality of livestock drinking water. Points are restricted to the practices listed.

4. Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance for a practice(s) that will mitigate the potential environmental risk of pest management control measures? Points are awarded when the application includes 595 Pest Management.

5. Will the EQIP application provide financial assistance for a practice(s) which will reduce erosion on cropland fields? (328, 329, 340, 342, 345, 380, 386, 393, 412, 512, 550, and/or 603) Points are restricted to the practices listed.

6. Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance for a practice(s) that will address saline seeps, recharge areas, and/or saline/sodic soils? (340, 386, 512, 550, 610) Points shall be awarded if the implementation of new practices will address the problems of saline seeps and the recharge area, or the practices will return cropped acres of saline soils to salt tolerant vegetation. Points are restricted to the practices listed.

7. Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance for a practice(s) that will reduce the number of tillage operations? (329, 340, 345, 512, 550,) Points are awarded when the new practices to be implemented in the application will reduce the number of tillage operations that the participant generally performs. Points are restricted to the practices listed. Note: In regard to 340 Cover Crops – only select this question as "Yes" if a reduction in tillage will truly be achieved. For example, producer practices fall tillage and by implementing cover crops he/she will no longer perform fall tillage.

8. Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance for the implementation of the organic component of 590-Nutrient Management? Points shall be awarded when organic materials are used in nutrient management.

9. Will the EQIP application provide financial assistance for a practice(s) to facilitate grazing distribution? Points shall be awarded when the practice(s) to be applied in this application result in improved grazing distribution. Practices such as 528 incentive, 642, 614, 382, or 516 could have this desired result.

10. Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance for a practice(s) that will convert cropland to introduced and/or native vegetation? (512, 550) Points shall be awarded when the EQIP application includes introduced or native herbaceous planting on cropland (512 or 550). Points are restricted to the practices listed.

Choose only one of the following questions, either 11 or 12. Points are awarded according to the planned practices that will improve STIR.

> 11. *Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance to achieve STIR of less than 9.0? (329)* "Yes" will be checked if the **planned** EQIP practices will provide a STIR of less than 9.0 according to RUSL2 calculator. Points are restricted to the practices listed.
>
> *12. Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance to achieve a STIR of 9.0 to 30.0? (329)* "Yes" will be checked if the **planned** EQIP practices will provide a STIR of 9.0 to 30 according to RUSL2 calculator. Points are restricted to the practices listed.

Choose only one of the following questions, either 13 or 14.

> *13. Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance for a practice(s) which assists in rotating a single herd rotates through 3-6 pastures?* Points shall be awarded when the applicant's current or future grazing system schedules a single herd of livestock to rotate through 3 to 6 pastures per grazing season. This determination shall be documented in the grazing system included in the conservation plan that accompanies the EQIP application or contract.
>
> *14. Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance for a practice(s) which assists in rotating a single herd rotates through 7 or more pastures?* Points shall be awarded when the applicant's current or future grazing system schedules a single herd of livestock to rotate through 7 or more pastures per grazing season. This determination shall be documented in the grazing system included in the conservation plan that accompanies the EQIP application or contract.

Choose only one of the following, 15, 16, 17 or 18.

> *15. Does the EQIP application provide for the implementation of a living snow fence that will provide snow protection for a State highway?* Points shall be awarded if the application includes a 380 for snow protection for a State highway.
>
> *16. Does the EQIP application provide for the implementation of a living snow fence that will provide snow protection for a County highway?* Points shall be awarded if the application includes a 380 for snow protection for a County highway.
>
> *17. Does the EQIP application provide for the implementation of a living snow fence that will provide snow protection for a county or township road?* Points shall be awarded if the application includes a 380 for snow protection for a county or township road.
>
> *18. Does the EQIP application provide for the implementation of a living snow fence that will provide snow protection for a private road?* Points shall be awarded if the application includes a 380 for snow protection for a private road.

Local Issues Addressed:

1. Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance for the implementation of 650 - Windbreak/Shelterbelt Renovation? Points shall be provided if the application requests assistance for 650.

2. Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance for a 394 - Firebreak assessment? The application requests the incentive for having a “Firewise” assessment on the application acreage.

3. Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance for the implementation of 666 - Forest Stand Improvement? Points shall be provided if the application requests assistance for 666.

4. Does the EQIP application provide financial assistance for the implementation of either 380 - Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment , 612 - Tree and Shrub Establishment, or 391 – Riparian Forest Buffer? Points shall be provided if the application requests assistance for 380, 612, or 391

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Ranking Instructions – FY2012 Socially Disadvantaged

An EQIP application will be ranked and compete within the Socially Disadvantaged Statewide Funding Pool when the applicant meets the Socially Disadvantaged eligibility requirements. The applicant can choose to apply under this pool or under another pool. In either case the Socially Disadvantaged toggle button under Participant information and the HU cost list must be chosen in order to receive the additional financial assistance. An applicant may only provide one FY 2012 EQIP application per operating unit per funding pool.

Note: ONLY financially assisted conservation practices will be considered during the application ranking

National Priorities Addressed and State Issues Addressed: see LWG instructions

Local Issues Addressed:

Pick any of the following resource criteria that apply:Answer "Yes" to only one of questions 1-3, as applicable.

1. *Does the application include one or more of the following practices to diversify the cropping system such as cover crops, conservation crop rotation, pest or nutrient management?* Points shall be awarded when the application includes 340, 328, 595, 590

2. *Does this application implement practices that will increase plant diversity, health, & vigor on grasslands and contain practices that will facilitate a grazing system?* Points shall be awarded when the application includes 382, 528, 516, 614, and 642.

3. *Does this application implement practices that provide for the protection, restoration, development, or enhancement of wildlife habitat?* Points shall be awarded when the application includes 391, 550, 580, 643, 656, 657, 658, 659.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Ranking Instructions – FY2012 Beginning Farmer

An EQIP application will be ranked and compete within the Beginning Farmer Statewide Funding Pool when the applicant meets the Beginning Farmer eligibility requirements. The applicant can choose to apply under this pool or under another pool. In either case the Beginning Farmer toggle button under Participant information and the HU cost list must be chosen in order to receive the additional financial assistance. An applicant may only provide one FY 2012 EQIP application per operating unit per funding pool.

Note: ONLY financially assisted conservation practices will be considered during the application ranking

National Priorities Addressed and State Issues Addressed: see LWG instructions

Local Issues Addressed:

Pick any of the following resource criteria that apply:
Answer "Yes" to only one of questions 1-3, as applicable.

1. *Does the application include one or more of the following practices to diversify the cropping system such as cover crops, conservation crop rotation, pest or nutrient management?* Points shall be awarded when the application includes 340, 328, 595, 590.

2. *Does this application implement practices that will increase plant diversity, health, & vigor on grasslands and contain practices that will facilitate a grazing system?* Points shall be awarded when the application includes 382, 528, 516, 614, 642.

3. *Does this application implement practices that provide for the protection, restoration, development, or enhancement of wildlife habitat?* Points shall be awarded when the application includes 391, 550, 580, 643, 656, 657, 658, 659.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Ranking Instructions – FY2012 Limited Resource Farmers

Limited Resource Farmers: Limited Resource Farmers (LRF) should apply under any appropriate fund code (there is not a separate LRF Fund Code). The toggle button under Participant Info and the HU cost list must be selected in order to be eligible for the additional financial assistance.