



Conservation Security Program 2005

United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service



Conservation Security Program

“CSP gives us the opportunity to reward those working conservationists who are trying to do leading-edge conservation, going beyond the minimum conservation requirements and really trying to reach for the stars in terms of what you can do with conservation,”

–NRCS Chief Bruce Knight, Ag Web, March 22, 2003



Conservation Security Program



- **Voluntary program authorized by the 2002 Farm Bill**
- **Rewards producers applying and documenting high levels of conservation and management**
- **Ability to earn payments by adding and/or expanding conservation activities**

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Conservation Security Program

Information included in this presentation:

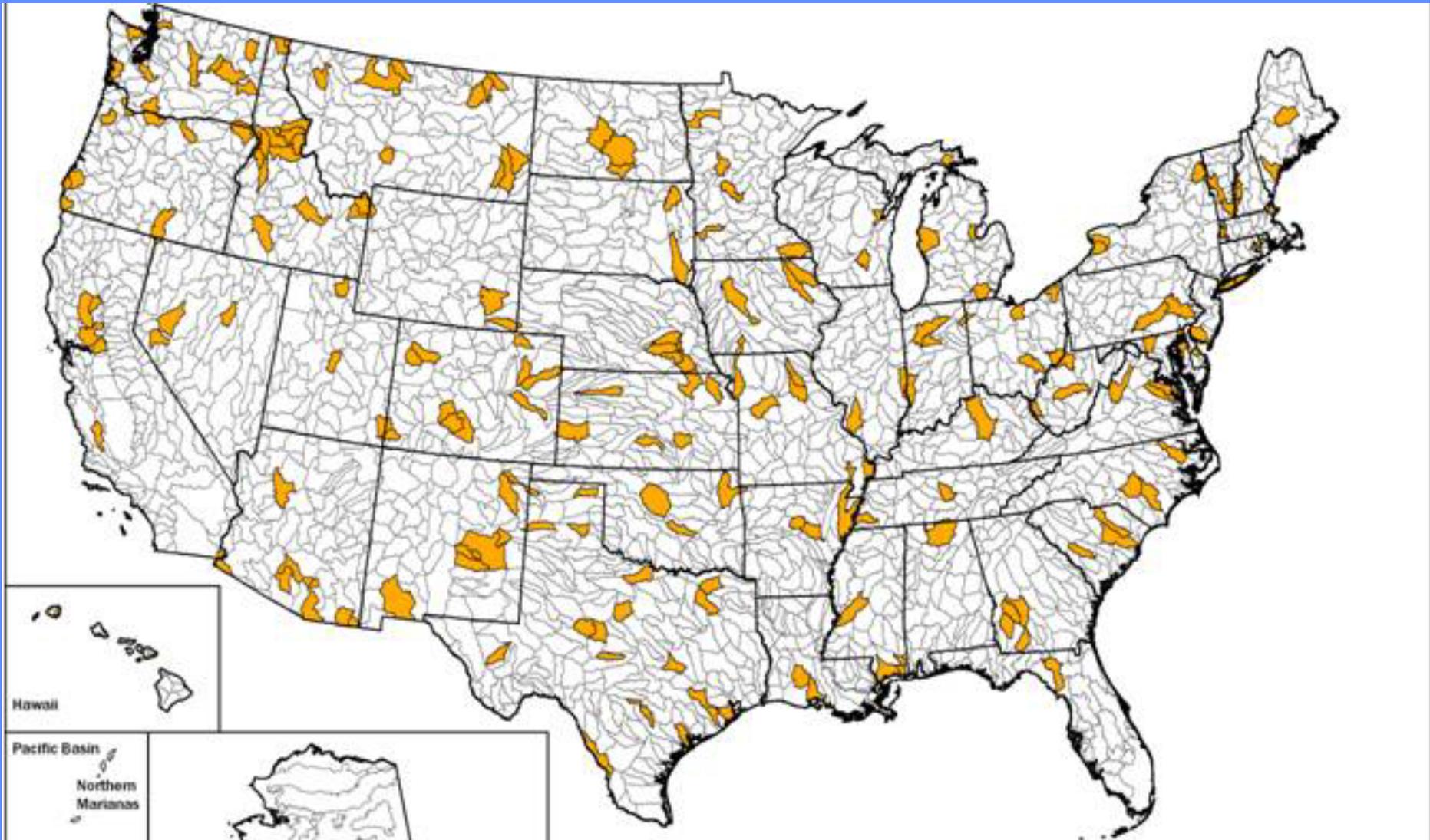
- Participating Watersheds
- Land and Producer Eligibility Requirements
- Treatment Requirements
- Tier Structure of CSP
- Payment Components
- Possible Enhancements
- Application Process



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The 2005 Watersheds



Cohansey- Maurice Watershed

Counties

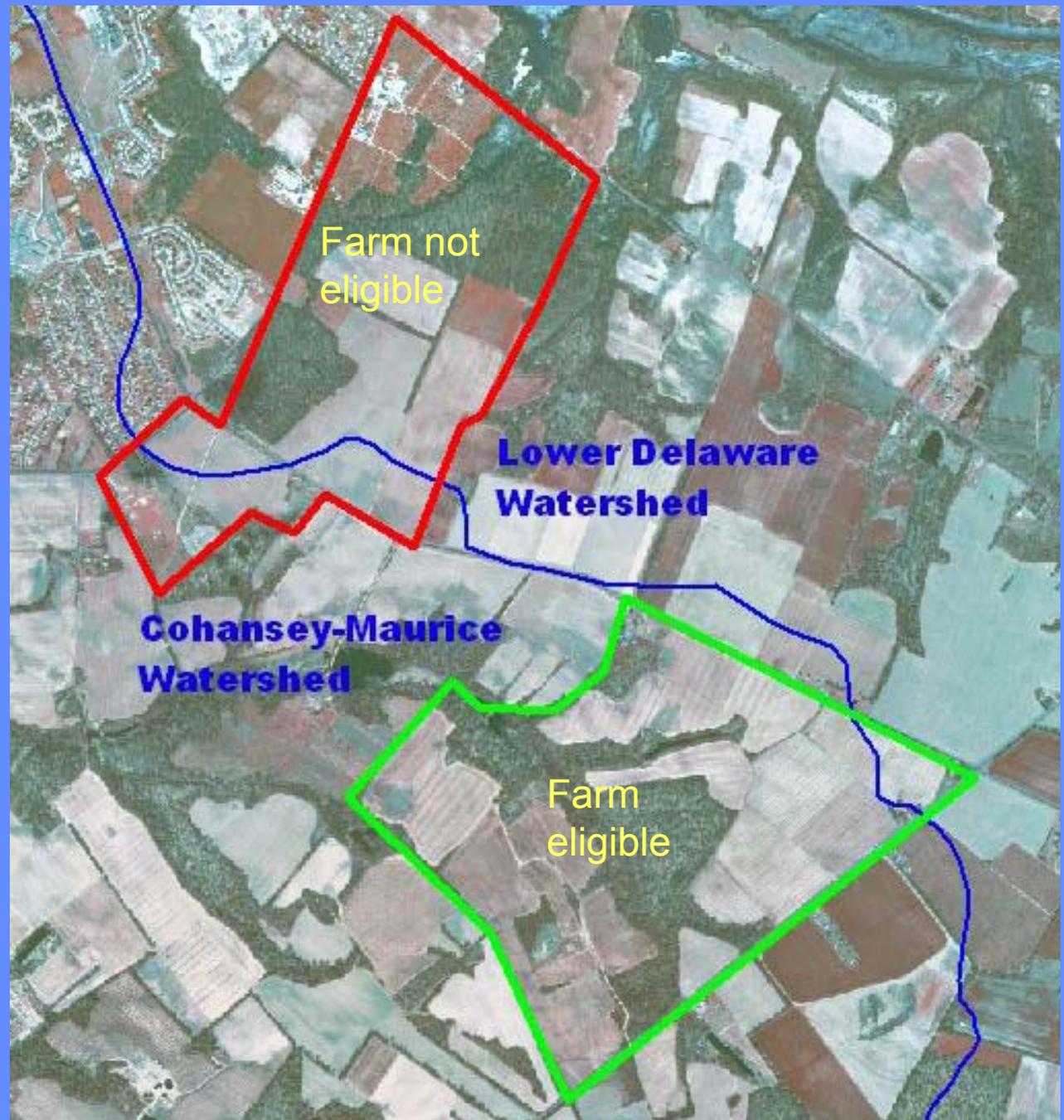
- Atlantic
- Cape May
- Cumberland
- Gloucester
- Salem



Eligibility Requirements for the Land

- Privately owned lands
- In compliance with HEL/wetland provisions
- Majority of operation within priority watershed

Example Land Eligibility





Land Eligibility continued



Eligible land uses include:

- Active cropland, orchards, vineyards, nurseries or pasture that were used for agricultural production for 4 of the 6 years prior to May 13, 2002.





Land Eligibility continued

Lands that are not eligible include:

- 
- Land already enrolled in the Wetlands Reserve Program, Grassland Reserve Program, or Conservation Reserve Program
 - Cropland that does not meet the eligible land definition
 - Forest land
 - Public land
- 

Eligibility Requirements for the Applicant

Must:

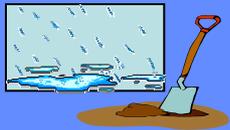
- have an active interest in the operation
- control the land for life of contract
- share risks and be entitled to share in profits/crops/livestock

Questions?

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CSP: A Three Tiered Program



I. Protect soil and water quality on part of your operation



II. Protect soil and water quality on all of your operation



III. Protect all natural resources concerns on all of your operation

Note: An operator may have only one CSP contract that covers their operation. There is only one opportunity to apply for benefits every eight years.

TIER EXAMPLES: Three Farms with Four Fields Each



Tier I Farm
(2 eligible fields)



Tier II Farm
(all fields eligible)



Tier III Farm
(all fields eligible, all resources protected)



= Meets minimum soil quality criteria on the field



= Meets minimum water quality criteria on the field



= Meets other resource concerns on the field

Minimum Soil Quality Criteria for Cropland

- All eligible fields must have a positive soil conditioning index
- The calculation of SCI is based on crops grown, tillage methods used, conservation practices installed, and overall field management
- SCI is calculated with the help of NRCS personnel

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Soil Conditioning Index Examples

Sample Rotation	SCI	Sample Rotation	SCI	Sample Rotation	SCI
Forage systems (all)	+				
Corn (silage or grain) - hay rotation, conventional tillage	+				
Soybeans wide row, Conventional tillage	-0.75	Soybeans no-till	0.072		
Corn grain, conventional tillage	-0.29	Corn grain, chisel -1 disk	0.096	Corn grain, conventional till on contour; two 15 ft or one 30 ft contour buffer strips	0.094-0.065
Fall seeded small grain, conventional tillage	-0.25	Fall seeded small grain, tandem disk-plant	0.08	Fall seeded small grain conventional till on contour; two 15 ft. or one 30 ft. contour buffer	0.085

Soil Conditioning Index Examples

Sample Rotation	SCI	Sample Rotation	SCI	Sample Rotation	SCI
Corn grain, wheat-pumpkins DC	-0.21	Eliminate 1 disking in corn planting; disk-plant pumpkins	0.11	Install 2 contour buffer strips, farm on near-contour.	0.055
Eggplant-tomatoes DC, wheat	-0.09	Establish all crops chisel/1 disk. 1 cultivation each for eggplant and tomatoes.	0.025	Install 2 contour buffer strips, farm on near-contour.	0.15
Spinach, sweet corn, soybeans	-0.61	Plant spinach and sweet corn disk/plant, no cultivations, NT soybeans, plant rye-vetch CC	0.077	Plant everything disk/plant, no cultivations. Plant rye CC after beans. Install 2 contour buffer strips, farm on near-contour.	0.019

Soil Conditioning Index Examples

Sample Rotation	SCI	Sample Rotation	SCI	Sample Rotation	SCI
Lettuce, tomatoes, snap beans all DC (2-year rotation)	-1	Double crop lettuce-tomatoes, limit to single cultivation for each. Fall clover/oats nurse cover allowed to grow for next full cropping year, killed April year 3	0.033	Disk-plant double crop lettuce-tomatoes, limit to single cultivation for each. Follow with disk plant snaps. Fall rye cover after beans. Install 2 contour buffer strips, farm on near-contour.	0.063
Vegs mixed DC, with cover crop	-1.4	Plant clover/oats cover crop each year. Disk plant the vegs (peas, cabb, beans, pepps) . No in season cultivations.	0.069	Disk plant the vegs (peas, cabb, beans, pepps) . No in season cultivations. Rye winter cover after 2 nd year. Install 3 contour buffer strips, farm on near-contour.	0.05

Minimum Water Quality Criteria for Cropland

- Must be no visible signs of erosion on any part of the field(s) for Tiers I and II
- Must be no visible signs of erosion on any part of the operation for Tier III

Minimum Water Quality Criteria for Cropland

- Must have the following nutrient documentation:
 - Soil test results for each field
 - Application records related to yield goals
- Records must be from two of the past three crop years

Minimum Water Quality Criteria for Cropland

- Must have the following pest documentation:
 - Scouting records on all crops, as appropriate
 - Application records, related to economic thresholds
- Records must be from two of the past three crop years

Minimum Criteria for Grazing Lands

- Protect soil and water quality as demonstrated through a grazing management plan.
 - pasture rotation schedule, forage budget, and forage enhancement practices
- Records must be from two of the past three years

Minimum Criteria Summary

- If you meet the minimum criteria on part of your land, you qualify for basic benefits under Tier I.
- If you meet the minimum criteria on all of your land, you may qualify for Tier II or Tier III.

Other Resource Concerns

In order to qualify for Tier II or Tier III payments, you must address an additional resource concern on part or all of your farm.

- Concerns include
 - Water quantity (irrigation water management)
 - Wildlife habitat for threatened or endangered species
 - Soil erosion

Questions?

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Four Payment Components

- An annual stewardship component for the benchmark (current level of) conservation treatment
- An annual existing practice component for maintaining existing conservation practices
- One-time new practice component for additional practices
- An enhancement component for exceptional conservation effort

CSP Payment Components

**Enhancement
Payment**

**New Practice
Payment**

**Existing Practice
Payment**

**Stewardship
Payment**



Stewardship Payment

- Base payment for qualifying for the program
- Payment differs based on your land use and the Tier level for which you qualify, and is paid annually on a per-acre basis.

Existing Practice Payment

- For maintenance of existing conservation practices on the farm.
- Annual payment equals 25% of the stewardship payment.

New Practice Payment

- 50% cost-share to install practices that help you reach the next Tier level.
 - Contour buffer strip
 - Critical area planting
 - Vegetative barriers
 - Field border
 - Riparian herbaceous cover
 - Filter strip
 - Use exclusion fencing
 - Pasture or hayland planting
 - Stream crossing for livestock access
 - Windbreak or shelterbelt

Enhancement Payments

- Enhancements are activities that provide environmental benefits
- They can be actions you already perform, or that you agree to perform in the future.
- Enhancement payments make up the largest part of your total CSP payment.

Proposed Enhancements

- Examples include:
 - Using windbreaks to reduce spray drift
 - Maintaining vegetative cover to benefit bob-white quail
 - Planting legume cover crops
 - Using organic pesticides or non-chemical control methods
 - Managing, conserving and/or producing energy on your farm

Cropland Example

You'd like to enroll your 127 acre grain farm, normally planted using minimum tillage and irrigated with a center pivot system. NRCS has determined you are currently eligible for Tier II.

In year 3, you seed a filter strip around your fields, and become eligible for Tier III payments.

In addition, you currently leave 4 acres of corn unharvested annually as a wildlife food plot.

You also will have implemented the advanced nutrient management practice on 60 acres by year 2, and on all 127 acres by year 6.

Cropland Example

There are 4 possible payment components:

- 1) stewardship
- 2) existing practice
- 3) new practice
- 4) enhancements

In this example, all four payment types would be used within the 10 year contract period.

Approximate Payment

Year	Stewardship Payment	Existing Practice Payment	Enhancement Payment	New Practice Payment	Total
1	127ac x \$4/ac = \$508	25% of \$508 = \$127	4ac wfp x \$100/ac = \$400		\$1,035
2	\$508	\$127	60ac 590A x \$15/ac = \$900 + \$400 wfp = \$1,300		\$1,935
3	\$508	\$127	\$1,300	3 ac filter x \$400/ac x 50% = \$600	\$2,535
4	127ac x \$9/ac = \$1,143	25% of \$1143 = \$286	\$1,300		\$2,729
5	\$1,143	\$286	\$1,300		\$2,729
6	\$1,143	\$286	127ac 590A x \$15/ac = \$1905 + \$400 wfp = \$2,305		\$3,734
7	\$1,143	\$286	\$2,305		\$3,734
8	\$1,143	\$286	\$2,305		\$3,734
9	\$1,143	\$286	\$2,305		\$3,734
10	\$1,143	\$286	\$2,305		\$3,734
				total contract	\$29,633

Questions?

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A Quick Look at Who's Ready to Participate

- Are You in the Watershed?
- Is Your Land Eligible?
- Are you, as an applicant, eligible?
- Have you achieved treatment requirements for soil and water?
- Are you doing or are you willing to do additional resource enhancements?

Application Overview

1. CSP Self-Assessment Workbook

- Determine eligibility
- Obtain field and rotation data
- List current conservation treatments

2. NRCS Interview

- Determine tier and enrollment category

3. National Selection of Contracts

- Process allows for as many contracts as possible to be funded

The Application Process

- Applicant defines the operation
 - Can be owned or rented but applicant needs to control for length of contract
- Only one contract per applicant

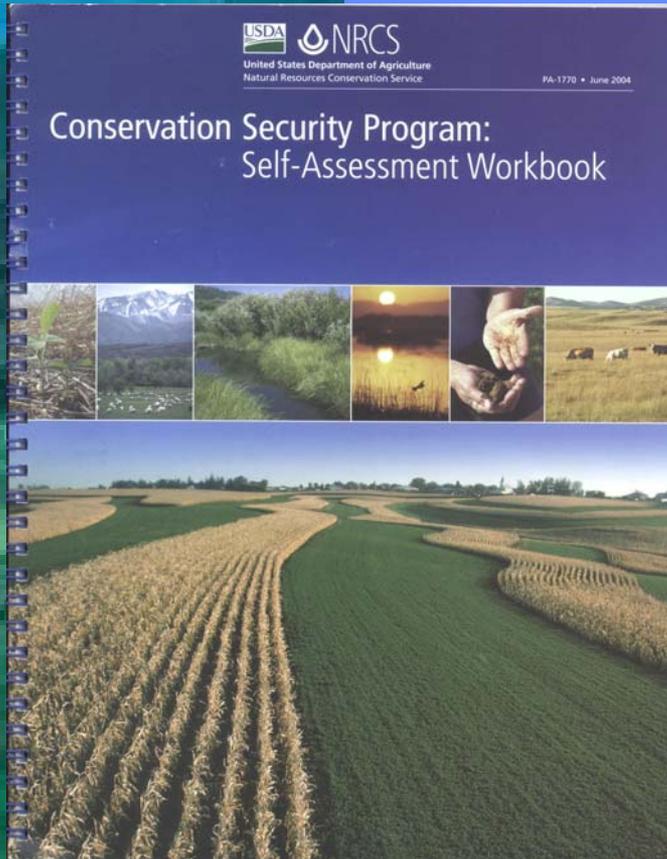


CSP: Application Process - Step 1



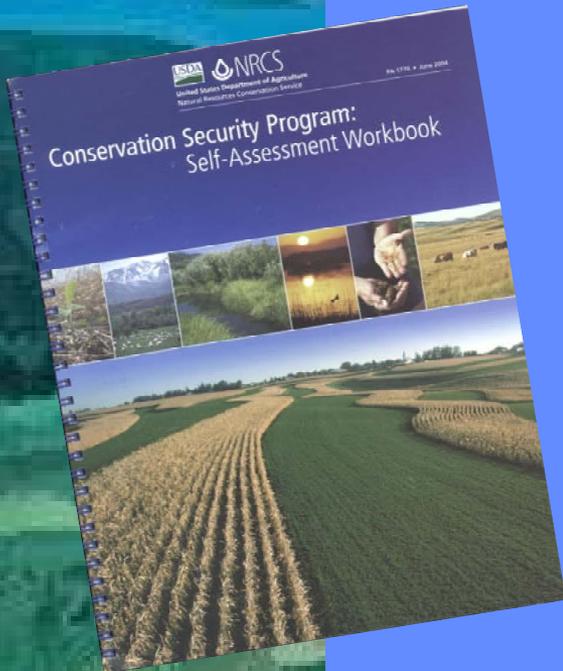
- Complete the Self-Assessment Workbook and worksheets
 - Available Online
 - Available on CD
 - Available as paper copy
- Should be completed prior to announcement of sign-up

Self-Assessment Process



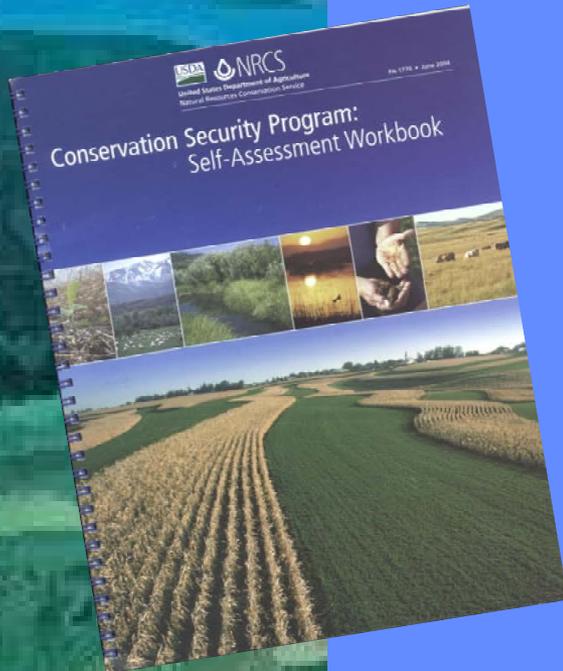
- Answers to the questions in the workbook are used to determine not only your basic eligibility, but your potential for elevated tier levels and enhancement payments.
- You do not have to answer “yes” to every question in the book to be eligible for CSP!

Application Process – Step 2



- Make an appointment with NRCS for an interview to review supporting documents
 - Map of the operation
 - Soil tests and manure tests
 - Crop records
 - List or location of existing practices

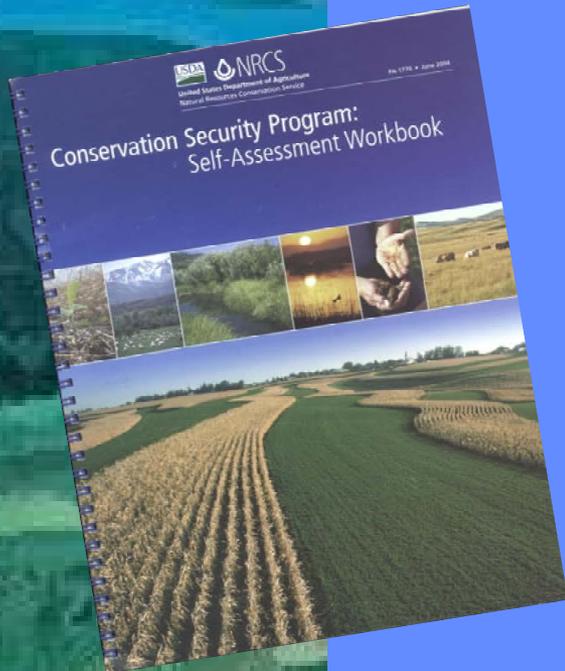
Application Process – Step 3



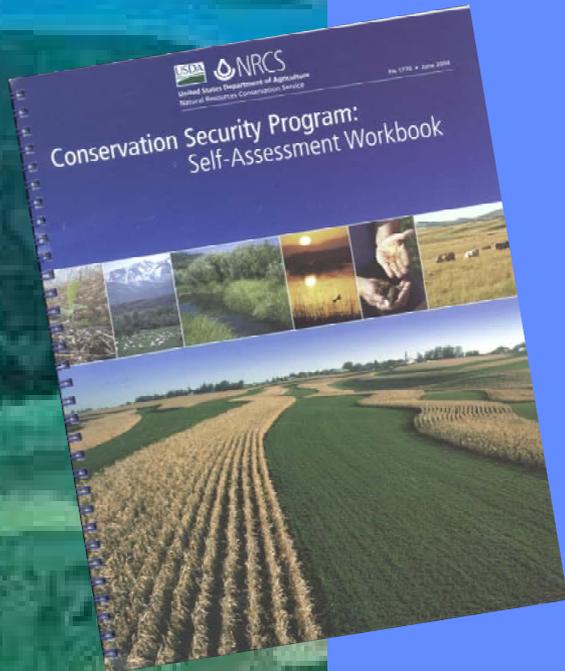
- NRCS determines basic eligibility
- NRCS determines enrollment categories
 - Based on practices in place,
 - agreed to practices,
 - soil condition and
 - pasture condition

Application Process – Step 4

- NRCS (nationally) selects categories to be funded
 - Amount of funds available limit how many categories are funded



Application Process – Step 5



- Funded applicants complete a Stewardship Plan
 - Can be developed by NRCS, or by a Technical Service Provider (TSP)
- Contract documents are completed by NRCS and signed by the applicant

Application Process

Interested producers will contact their local NRCS office for an appointment during the sign-up period.

Vineland Service Center
(856) 205-1225 x 3
1317 South Main Road

Woodstown Service Center
(856) 769-1126 x 3
51 Cheney Road

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Questions?

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