

specific pest management strategies and treatments, lands can be reclaimed for more productive purposes.

## Financial Assistance

Producers selected through the ranking processes can voluntarily enter into long-term agreements of up to 10 years and agree to maintain the practices for the expected life of the practices. Incentive payment rates are variable by resource concern and practice, and are in the form of average cost payments for structural practices and incentive payments for management practices.

## Sign-up Dates

Applications are taken on a continuous basis for local resource concerns. Batching dates are set by the local EQIP workgroup for ranking and allocation purposes. All applications taken prior to announced batching dates will be considered for ranking and funding. Applications taken after the batching date, or incomplete applications, will be held until the next batching date. State-wide resource concern special projects will have specific batching, ranking, allocation, and funding requirements.

## How Do I Apply?

Applications for this program are being taken at your county Soil and Water Conservation District and Natural Resources Conservation Service Office.

Your application and others received prior to batching dates will be ranked and funded based on environmental benefits.



*Financial and technical assistance is available from NRCS to install interior cross-fencing and water for rotational grazing systems.*

For additional information, contact:

USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)  
P.O. Box 311 (3381 Skyway Drive, 36830)  
Auburn, AL 36831-0311  
Phone: 334-887-4500  
Fax: 334-887-4551

You may also visit Alabama NRCS online:  
<http://www.al.nrcs.usda.gov/>

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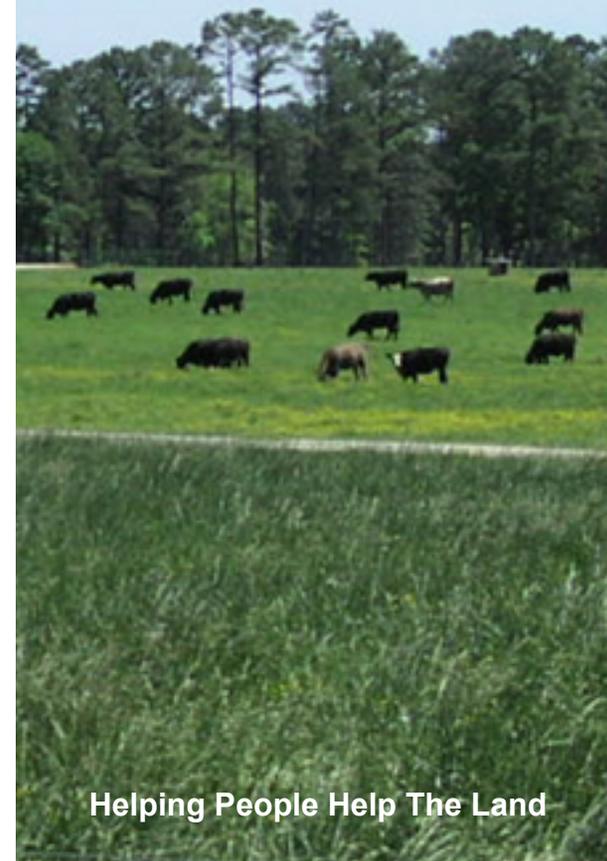
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United States Department of Agriculture

# Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) In Alabama



Helping People Help The Land

## Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

The EQIP program is a voluntary program that provides assistance to farmers and ranchers who face threats to soil, water, air, and related natural resources on their land. The program offers financial and technical assistance to target specific natural resource concerns such as water conservation, at risk species habitat, soil quality, water quality, invasive plants, poultry litter distribution, and grazing lands while optimizing environmental benefits. Practices must be installed according to a conservation plan developed by NRCS or a Technical Service Provider (TSP) and approved by the local Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). EQIP is one of several federal, state, and local conservation programs that producers can use to solve natural resource conservation problems.

### Water Conservation

Improving irrigation systems and/or enhancing irrigation efficiencies promote ground and surface water conservation on agricultural lands.

### Water Quality (Nutrients)

Streams, farm ponds, wetlands, and other water bodies are negatively impacted by excessive levels of nutrients. Water quality and aquatic plant, animal, and fish populations living in these water bodies are threatened. Nutrients are delivered to water bodies from extensive erosion on cropland or from runoff of animal waste on cropland or pastureland. Overflowing animal waste lagoons, runoff from stockpiled poultry litter, or runoff from feed lots can directly affect water quality in streams, lakes, or wetlands. Proper management and land distribution

and application of animal waste can significantly reduce the impact of nutrients, bacteria, and pathogens on water quality.

### Grazing Lands

Livestock congregate in the shade and in cool streams. High concentration of animal waste in the wooded areas adjacent to and in streams increases the chance of stream contamination. Livestock producers can better use these nutrients in pastures rather than contaminating the water. Fencing and alternative water supplies facilitate rotational grazing and manage livestock access to streams, improve water quality, and increase profits.

### Soil Quality

A major contributor of sediment in streams, lakes, and wetlands is cropland erosion. Thousands of tons of sediment can erode from concentrated water flow areas, filling streams and wetlands with sediment, killing trees, and destroying fish and aquatic species, as well as reducing soil quality and fertility.

### At Risk Species Habitat

Populations of threatened and endangered (T&E) plants and animals have been steadily declining due to reduced habitat. Reestablishment of Longleaf pine ecosystems, bobwhite quail habitat, as well as other targeted species will help to increase populations of T&E species.

### Invasive Species

Many non-native plant species are encroaching on important forest, pastureland, and cropland. By using

