

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) has been around since 1996 and has seen a growth in popularity and funding. EQIP is NRCS' principal program for delivering conservation technical and financial assistance to private landowners. EQIP supports the needs of agricultural operations with or without livestock by offering ideas, solutions, and guidance for a successful and sustainable conservation operation. Practices described, and others, can be selected and installed after developing a conservation plan designed to address your specific resource concerns. For confined livestock operations, the following list of conservation practices are the most commonly used.



Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP)

A CNMP is a plan that groups conservation practices and management activities which, when implemented as part of a conservation system, will help to ensure that both production and natural resource protection goals are achieved. Unique to animal feeding operations, a CNMP incorporates practices to utilize animal manure and organic by-products as beneficial resources. The CNMP documents planned agricultural waste management system and addresses these natural resource concerns:

1. Soil erosion and soil quality,
2. Water quality, and
3. Air quality.



Manure Transfer (Conservation Practice Standard 634)

Manure Transfer is a practice that transfers animal manure (bedding material, spilled feed, process and wash water, and other residues associated with animal production) through a hopper or reception pit, a pump (if applicable), a conduit, or hauling equipment. It reaches from one location to another, including:

1. Manure storage/treatment facility,
2. Loading area, or
3. Agricultural land for final utilization.



Waste Storage Facility (Conservation Practice Standard 313)

A Waste Storage Facility is used to temporarily store wastes (such as manure, wastewater, and contaminated runoff). The practice can be used where:

1. A storage facility is a component of a planned agricultural waste management system,
2. It can be constructed, operated and maintained without polluting air or water resources,
3. Site conditions are suitable for construction of the facility, and
4. It includes structures such as tanks, stocking facilities and holding ponds.



Nutrient Management (Conservation Practice Standard 590)

Nutrient Management addresses the rate, form, timing, and placement of nutrients to adequately supply soils and plants what they need to produce food, forage, and fiber. The techniques, used with other conservation practices, minimize nutrient losses from fields and protect surface and ground water supplies. Properly applied, these practices can:

1. Budget, supply, and conserve nutrients for plant production,
2. Minimize agricultural nonpoint source pollution of surface and groundwater resources,
3. Use manure or organic by-products as a plant nutrient source,
4. Protect air quality by reducing odors, nitrogen emissions (ammonia, oxides of nitrogen), and formation of atmospheric particulates, and
5. Maintain or improve the physical, chemical, and biological condition of soil.



Access Road (Conservation Practice Standard 560)

An Access Road is a travel-way for equipment and vehicles. When constructed as part of a conservation system, the road provides a fixed route for vehicular travel for management of the livestock operation and protects adjacent natural resources.



Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment (Conservation Practice Standard 380)

Windbreaks and Shelterbelts are linear plantings of single or multiple rows of trees or shrubs or sets of linear plantings. In conjunction with a confined livestock system, a windbreak can provide the following benefits:

1. Improves air quality by reducing and intercepting airborne particulate matter, chemicals, and odors,
2. Provides living noise screens and visual screens, and
3. Provides shelter for structures or livestock.



Roof Runoff Structure (Conservation Practice Standard 558)

A Roof Runoff Structure is typically a gutter system, used as part of an agricultural waste management system to divert water from structures or contaminated areas. This practice:

1. Improves runoff water quality ,
2. Reduces soil erosion, and
3. Minimizes the volume of contaminated wastewater requiring treatment or storage.



Solid Liquid Waste Separation Facility (Conservation Practice Standard 632)

A Solid/Liquid Waste Separation Facility is a filtration or screening device, settling tank, settling basin, or a settling channel that separates solids from a liquid waste stream. This practice is a primary treatment process that facilitates other treatments or uses of the waste products, such as vegetated treatment areas, composting, feed supplement, or bedding. Benefits include :

1. Improved or protected air quality,
2. Improved or protected water quality,
3. Improved or protected animal health, and
4. Meeting management objectives.



Vegetated Treatment Area (Conservation Practice Standard 635)

A Vegetated Treatment Area is designed to treat contaminated runoff from such areas as feedlots, compost areas, barnyards, and other livestock holding areas. Typically, in agricultural waste management systems, a settling basin is positioned upstream of the vegetated treatment area to remove most of the solid material before applying the liquid waste water to the vegetated treatment area. As part of a waste management system, the vegetated treatment area can provide improved water quality to reduce loading of nutrients, organics, pathogens, and other contaminants associated with livestock, poultry, and other agricultural operations.