



United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

SD-FS-69
September 2011

How to Apply for Conservation Programs of the Farm Bill



An NRCS rangeland management specialist providing technical information about a recently established native grass seeding.



NRCS staff can work with landowners to enhance their natural resources for better wildlife habitat.



Using a conservation plan, NRCS helps customers with their goals by planning and implementing conservation practices on private lands.

Helping People Help the Land

Conservation Technical Assistance

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) helps customers plan and implement conservation practices on private lands through technical assistance. Technical assistance is available to producers regardless of participation in a financial assistance program. A variety of financial assistance programs are offered through USDA to assist with or offset costs of conservation practices and activities.

Establishing Eligibility for USDA Programs

If you have never worked with the USDA and don't have a farm and tract number, you will need to make an appointment with the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) at your local USDA Service Center to establish eligibility for USDA programs.

Find local USDA Service Center locations at
<http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app>

You will need to bring the following information to the appointment as appropriate:

- **Proof of Identity**--you may be required to show a valid state driver's license, passport, or other personal identification, as well as provide your Social Security number or Employer Identification (EIN) number, address, and other related information.
- **Copy of the recorded deed.**
- **Copy of the articles of incorporation, by-laws, legal power of attorney, or partnership paperwork, if applicable.**

The forms below will be provided by FSA or NRCS staff:

- **Form AD 1026**--Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation Determination.
- **Form CCC 931**-- **Average** Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) Certification and Consent to Disclosure of Tax Information.
- **Form CCC 901**--Member's Information, if applicable.
- **Form CCC 902E** - Farm Operating Plan for an entity, if applicable.

It takes time for the paperwork to be processed and additional information may be needed. Please start this process early in order to ensure you are eligible prior to any program cutoff dates. If you apply for a USDA program and the system does not yet show you or your entity as eligible, your application will not be considered for funding.

Note on confidential and private information:

Many of the program application forms or documentation require the applicant to provide sensitive contact, financial or other confidential information. Disclosure of this data is voluntary, but failure to provide the required information may result in the deferral of an application or denial of a benefit payment. By law and policy, confidential, private and sensitive information is protected by USDA. USDA employees and partners are subject to penalty and disciplinary action for inappropriate or mismanagement of private data.

Applying for Conservation Programs of the Farm Bill

If you are already a USDA program participant, your records should be on file with FSA and you are eligible to apply for programs of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

You will need to submit the following paperwork to the NRCS office at your local USDA Service Center prior to any program cutoff dates. The office will have these forms and can assist you with the paperwork. The information may need updating for additional information or items may be needed for specific programs.

- **Form NRCS-CPA-1200**, signed and dated by all applicants. Please be sure to answer all questions, one through 12. You may be eligible for additional program benefits if you are a:
 - Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher,
 - Beginning Farmer or Rancher,
 - Socially Disadvantaged (minority) Farmer or Rancher.
- **Form NRCS CPA-1202-CPC Appendix**, to be signed and dated by all applicants when the contract is obligated. Please read the appendix and address any questions you have to the NRCS representative.
- **Form 1199A**, direct deposit form. You may apply for a one-time hardship waiver if you do not wish to utilize direct deposit.

Land ownership or control--You will be required to provide evidence of control of land through ownership documents (deeds, etc.) or lease information (rental agreements, permits, lease, etc.)

Signature authority--If the applicant is an entity, documents such as articles of incorporation, charter, by-laws, partnership agreements, trust agreements, wills, and similar legal evidence will be needed.

Conservation plan--If you do not have a conservation plan on file, the NRCS representative will schedule an appointment with you to complete the on-site assessment and plan. If you already have a conservation plan on file, the NRCS representative will review your plan with you. Then, you will decide which practices you want to include in the program application(s) and complete the application process.

Program application and ranking--Your NRCS representative will enter the application(s) for the specific program in the computer system, ask for any additional information needed, and rank the application(s). During the federal fiscal year, applications are ranked for selection and funding based on federal, state, and local ranking factors. After the cutoff date, the highest ranked applications will be funded until the money is exhausted.

For more information

Contact your local NRCS office for information on specific programs or visit us on the web at: <http://www.sd.nrcs.usda.gov/programs>.



An NRCS employee helping a producer establish a transect to monitor the vegetation for her grazing plan.