

NRCS Announces National Water Quality Initiative Conservation in Puerto Rico

*Agricultural Producers located in the **Rio Grande de Añasco** priority watershed will be able to participate*

May 9, 2012 – San Juan, PR – NRCS Caribbean Area Director, Edwin Almodóvar, announced the launch of a new [National Water Quality Initiative](#) committed to improving impaired waterways in western Puerto Rico. USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will manage the initiative by making funds available to

farmers, ranchers and forest landowners in the **Rio Grande de Añasco** watershed.

"The Water Quality Initiative will further NRCS' partnership efforts to improve water quality using voluntary actions on private lands," Director Almodóvar said. *"This initiative is a focused approach in areas facing significant natural resource challenges. It bolsters the positive results of landscape conservation initiatives NRCS and its partners already have underway."*

Through this effort, eligible producers in the **Rio Grande de Añasco** watershed will invest in voluntary conservation actions to help provide cleaner water for their neighbors and communities. The selected watershed was identified with help from state agencies, partners, and the NRCS State Technical Committee.

Using funds from the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, NRCS will provide funding and advice to producers to install conservation practices such as cover crops, filter strips and terraces in watersheds with impairments where the federal investment can make a difference to improve water quality.

"American farmers are good stewards of the environment, especially when they have the tools they need to protect or improve fish and wildlife habitat and water quality," said NRCS Chief Dave White. *"We look forward to collaborating with producers in key watersheds to help them have a positive impact on streams with impaired water quality."*



Contour row cropping for plantains is one of the many conservation practices to be used in the Rio Grande de Añasco watershed to improve water quality.

