

NRCS NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Natural Resources Conservation Service
375 Jackson Street • Suite 600 St. Paul, MN 55101-1854 • (651) 602-7900
Web: <http://www.mn.nrcs.usda.gov>

Contact:

[Julie MacSwain](#) State Public Affairs Specialist, (651) 602-7859

NRCS Accepting Applications from Minnesota Farmers for Key Conservation Program

ST PAUL, MN, Dec. 11, 2012 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is accepting applications to help producers improve water and air quality, build healthier soil, improve grazing and forest lands, conserve energy, enhance organic operations, and achieve other environmental benefits.

NRCS has directed almost \$23.7 million in financial assistance for fiscal 2013 to help Minnesota producers implement conservation practices through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the agency’s largest Farm Bill conservation program. Interested producers should visit their local NRCS service center for information on EQIP sign-up periods.

“The Environmental Quality Incentives Program offers farmers, ranchers and forestland managers a variety of options to conserve natural resources while boosting production on their lands,” State Conservationist Don Baloun said. “This \$23.7 million conservation investment helps improve environmental health and the economy of Minnesota’s rural communities.”

EQIP provides financial assistance for a variety of conservation activities, such as irrigation water management, reduced tillage, field buffers, rotational grazing systems and much more. The deadline for the next signup period in Minnesota is January 18, 2013. Additional signup deadlines include: February 15, 2013; March 15, 2013 and April 19, 2013.

Additionally, NRCS offers special initiatives through EQIP, including:

- On-Farm Energy Initiative: helps producers conserve energy on their operations.
- Seasonal High Tunnel Initiative: helps producers install high tunnels designed to extend the growing season into the cold months, increase productivity, keep plants at a steady temperature and conserve water and energy.
- Organic Initiative: helps producers to install conservation practices on certified organic operations or those working toward organic certification.

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To participate in EQIP, an applicant must be an individual, entity or joint operation that meets EQIP eligibility criteria. Applicants can sign up at their local NRCS service center.

For more information about EQIP or other technical or financial assistance programs offered by NRCS, please contact your local service center: [local service center](#)

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USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) helps America's farmers and ranchers conserve the Nation's soil, water, air and other natural resources. All programs are voluntary and offer science-based solutions that benefit both the landowner and the environment.

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