Is Your Farming System **In Compliance**?

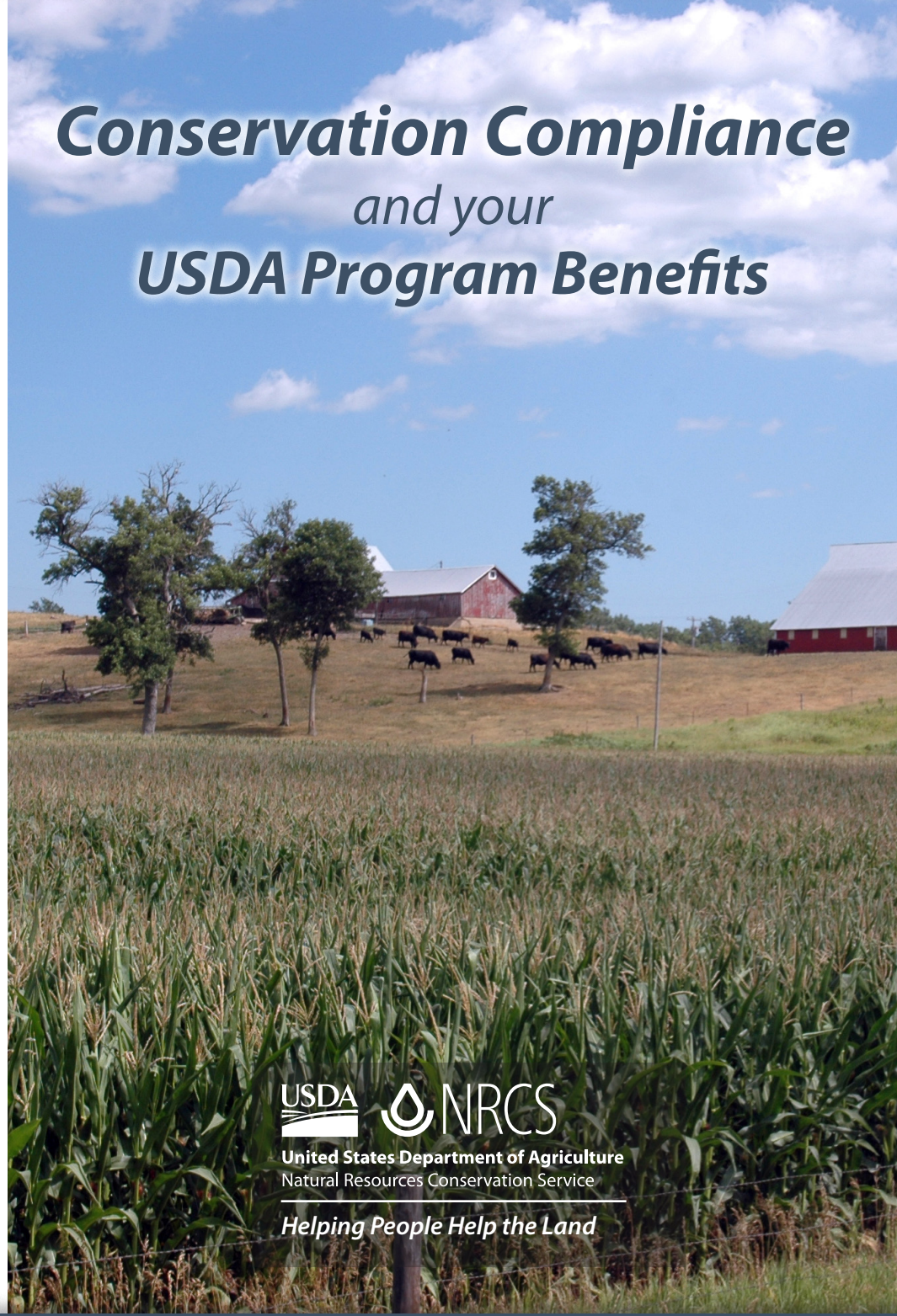
A few simple questions will help you determine if you should check your conservation compliance status:

Yes	No	
☐	☐	**Are you clearing new ground to farm?**
☐	☐	**Do you plan to level, tile, add tile, repair tile, drain, ditch, or clear woody vegetation on any part of your land?**
☐	☐	**Are you planning to change or do any physical management or improvement to any wet or poorly drained land, waterways or ditches?**
☐	☐	**Does any part of a field seem to hold water longer than other areas?**
☐	☐	**Do any of your fields have a 'low spot' that always seems to have a puddle?**
☐	☐	**Is one area always the last you can work with equipment in the spring?**
☐	☐	**Do you plan to change a crop rotation, increase tillage or alter a farming system?**
☐	☐	**Do you have erosion problems in your crop fields?**
☐	☐	**Do you have small gullies form on your crop fields?**

If you answered "Yes" to any of these questions, visit your local NRCS or FSA office to find out if your land is subject to the conservation compliance provisions of the 1985 Farm Bill.

Your local USDA Service Center will help you find out if your land is classified as highly erodible land (HEL), has hydric soils, or needs a determination.

Conservation Compliance
and your
USDA Program Benefits



USDA NRCS

United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Helping People Help the Land

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Since January 1, 1995, Conservation Compliance has been a requirement of all USDA program participants. Compliance is required if you farm highly erodible land (HEL) or if there are wetlands on your farm. If either of these affect you, watch out for the two Big T's: **Tillage and Tiling**.

Tillage

ANY tillage not accounted for in your conservation plan may put you out of compliance with the erosion provisions of your conservation plan.

Before doing any additional field work, check with your NRCS office. This work may include:

- Using any new tillage implement.
- Conducting any tillage if your conservation plan calls for **no-till**.
- Fixing small gullies on HEL from ephemeral erosion.

Tiling

Before you tile ANY farm ground, check with NRCS to make sure you are not draining a wetland protected by the provisions of the 1985 Farm Bill or Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. If you drain a protected wetland, you could lose eligibility for USDA programs.

In addition to tiling, wetland compliance may be affected by:

- Removing trees and tree stumps
- Adding fill to wetlands
- Adding surface intakes
- Increasing the size of tile mains outside of wetlands
- Surface field drainage ditches

Should I be concerned about Conservation Compliance?

- ☐ I farm highly erodible land.
- ☐ Wetlands are a part of my farm.

If you checked either one of these boxes and you participate in USDA conservation and/or commodity programs, compliance is an important consideration while making decisions on how to manage your farm.

How to Stay in Compliance:

- Keep following the provisions in your highly erodible land (HEL) conservation plan.
- Do not make changes to your HEL conservation plan that result in increased soil loss rates.
- Do not drain or alter a wetland area WITHOUT talking to NRCS first.

Always check with NRCS to protect your USDA program eligibility. Below is a list of NRCS Farm Bill conservation programs in which conservation compliance is required:

- Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)
- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
- Farm and Ranchlands Protection Program (FRPP)
- Grassland Reserve Program (GRP)
- Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)
- Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)

** Check with your local USDA Service Center for FSA programs impacted by compliance provisions.*