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December 18, 2012

KANSAS BULLETIN NO. KS300-13-31

SUBJECT: LTP–Environmental Quality Incentives Program–Fiscal Year 2013 National On-Farm Energy Initiative

Action required by: February 15, 2013 (Field Offices [FOs])
April 15, 2013

Action required by: March 1, 2013 (Area Offices [AOs])
April 30, 2013

Action required by: March 8, 2013 (State Office [SO])

Purpose. To cancel Kansas Bulletin KS300-13-23 and reissue the guidance for administering the Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) National On-Farm Energy Initiative (NOFEI)

Expiration Date. September 30, 2014

This bulletin replaces Kansas Bulletin KS300-13-23. The following change was made to the bulletin.

- ***On page two of the bulletin, the word “not” was removed so the statement now reads “The following CAPs are offered as part of the NOFEI.”***

Background

Under the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008, Title II, Subtitle F—EQIP, Section 250, authority is provided for use of EQIP (as a national purpose) to specifically address energy conservation through practice implementation and for development of an Agricultural Energy Management Plan (AgEMP). During FY 2013, the program is designed to assist producers in two ways:

(more)

DIST: A, F, S, C. Nelson, Volkman

- 1) Identify ways to conserve energy on their farms through an AgEMP conservation activity plan (CAP), also known as an on-farm energy audit.
- 2) Provide assistance to implement various recommended measures through the use of conservation practices (CPs) offered through this initiative, such as CP 374, Farmstead Energy Improvement.

Only through implementation of recommended measures and CPs will energy conservation, efficiency, and savings be achieved.

Eligible Land Uses, Resource Concerns, and Conservation Practices

The eligible land uses, resource concerns, and CPs are available in Attachment 1.

The following CAPs are offered as part of the NOFEI.

- AgEMP–Headquarters (122)
- AgEMP–Landscape (124)

Screening Criteria

Attachment 4 contains the NOFEI Screening Criteria Worksheet which shall be completed for each eligible NOFEI application. A screening priority of HIGH, MEDIUM, or LOW must be recorded in Program Contracts System (ProTracts).

To receive HIGH screening priority, the application is for an AgEMP (122 or 124) OR the application includes at least 1 “Core” CP necessary to implement the recommendations identified in a recently (within the last 4 years) completed AgEMP (122 or 124) or comprehensive on-farm energy audit meeting American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers [ASABE] S612 Type 2 standard (Attachment 3).

To receive MEDIUM screening priority, the application includes zero “Core” CPs , but does include at least 1 “Supporting” CP necessary to implement the recommendations identified in a recently (within the last 4 years) completed AgEMP Plan (122 or 124) or comprehensive on-farm energy audit meeting ASABE S612 Type 2 standard.

LOW screening priority will be giving to all other applications not meeting requirements for HIGH or MEDIUM priority. LOW priority applications will not be ranked.

ProTracts Ranking Tool

The ProTracts fund code for the NOFEI is “FY13 On-Farm Energy.”

National ranking questions are consistent for all EQIP applications; however, only questions 1a, 3a, 3b, 3c, 4b, 4c, 8a, 8b, 8c, 9a, 9b, and 9c apply to the NOFEI. All other national questions shall be answered “No.” Refer to bulletin KS300-13-19 for additional guidance on answering national questions.

A copy of the state and local ranking questions are provided in Attachment 2.

Applications including a CAP will have significant ranking priority by receiving the total maximum points available in the ranking process. If application is made for a CAP, then question 1 for each of the national, state, and local ranking questions will be answered "Yes," and all remaining national, state, and local ranking questions will be answered "No."

The ProTracts application type of "planning" must be associated with each CAP application and ranking of these applications is required in FY 2013.

NOTE: CAPs require the use of a Technical Service Provider (TSP) to complete a conservation plan. See electronic Field Office Technical Guide (eFOTG), Section III, CAPs Technical Criteria, for CAP requirements.

An "Energy Benefits" button is available in ProTracts in order to capture the estimated energy savings for certain practices. As part of the NOFEI, this button must be checked "Yes" for all contract items which are being implemented based on the recommendations provided as part of a completed on-farm energy audit. Checking "Yes" will require the user to enter the numeric values for the estimated energy savings from the completed on-farm energy audit as well as information on greenhouse gases and air pollutants directly associated with the energy savings.

NOTE: The "Energy Benefits" should be checked "no" for AgEMP CAP applications since energy savings do not occur unless the recommended measures provided in an AgEMP CAP report are implemented.

All eligible applications shall be entered into the Conservation Programs Geographic Information System Interface (CPGI). All answers available on the CPGI report will be used to answer the corresponding question on the ProTracts Application Evaluation and Ranking Tool (AERT). The application identification number in CPGI will match the application identification number from ProTracts.

Deadlines

Although applications for EQIP are accepted continuously, the FY 2013 application evaluation period cutoff date for NOFEI applications has been set for January 18, 2013. Should funds remain after approvals are made, an additional application evaluation period cutoff date will be announced.

FOs will have conservation plans and application rankings completed by February 15, 2013.

AOs will ensure peer reviews of rankings have been completed by March 1, 2013.

The SO Programs Staff will make funding decisions by March 8, 2013.

FOs will have all approved applications and documentation entered in electronic contracts (eContracts) by April 15, 2013.

Assistant state conservationists for field operations (ASTCs-FO) will ensure that all contracts have been obligated in ProTracts by April 30, 2013.

Approved applications over \$150,000 will follow guidance issued in Bulletin KS300-12-11. The ASTCs-FO will need to submit the request as soon as possible to meet the program deadlines.

Contact: Please forward questions through established channels, to Chad G. Volkman, Resource Conservationist, at chad.volkman@ks.usda.gov or call (785)823-4568.

/(Signed) JEFFREY L. GROSS, ACTING FOR

ERIC B. BANKS
State Conservationist

Attachments