

**ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM  
APPLICATION EVALUATION RANKING TOOL NATIONAL QUESTIONS  
NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE**

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Ranking Questions	2012 Points
1. Clean and Abundant Water: Water Quality—Will the proposed project assist the producer to:	
1a. Meet regulatory requirements relating to animal feeding operations, or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?	15
Answer “yes” if the animal feeding operation is located in a high priority Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) watershed for fecal coliform bacteria (see Conservation Programs Geographic Information System [GIS] Interface [CPGI]) AND the EQIP Conservation Plan of Operations (CPO) <u>does not</u> include the following Conservation Practices: 578, 606, and 642.	
1b. Reduce sediment, nutrients, or pesticides from agricultural operations located within a field that adjoins a designated impaired water body?	10
Answer “yes” if the unit of concern is located in a high priority TMDL watershed for eutrophication, dissolved oxygen, nutrients, and/or pesticides (see CPGI) AND the EQIP CPO <u>does not</u> include the following Conservation Practices: 578, 606, and 642.	
1c. Reduce sediment, nutrients, or pesticides from agricultural operations located within a field that adjoins a water body?	5
Answer “yes” if the unit of concern is located adjacent to a water body (lake, pond, or perennial stream as determined by the 1:24,000 scale hydrography layer) AND the EQIP CPO <u>does not</u> include the following Conservation Practices: 578, 606, and 642.	
2. Clean and Abundant Water: Water Conservation—Will the proposed project assist the producer to:	
2a. Increase groundwater recharge in identified groundwater depletion areas ( <a href="http://water.usgs.gov/ogw/rasa/html/TOC.html">http://water.usgs.gov/ogw/rasa/html/TOC.html</a> )?	15
Answer “yes” if the unit of concern is located within a Kansas Water Plan Priority Groundwater Decline Area (see CPGI).	
2b. Conserve water from irrigation system improvements and result in estimated water savings of at least five percent and saved water will be available for other beneficial uses?	10
Answer “yes” if the application includes an irrigation system being improved with an estimated net water savings of at least five percent AND any of the following conservation practices <u>are included</u> in the EQIP CPO: 328, 329, 344, 345, 346, 430, 441, 442, 449, 512, and 550.	
2c. Conserve water in an area where the applicant participates in a geographically established or watershed-wide project?	5
Answer “yes” if any part of the unit of concern is located within a state designated Quick Response Area and/or Intensive Groundwater Use Conservation Area.	

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3. Clean Air: Treatment of Air Quality from Agricultural Sources–Will the proposed project assist the producer to:	
3a. Meet regulatory requirements relating to air quality or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?	15
Answer “yes” if the EQIP CPO <u>includes</u> any of the following Conservation Practices: 340, 342, 366, 367, 380, 386, 391, 484, 550, 589C, 590, 603, 612,650, 657, 658, and 659.	
3b. Reduce greenhouse gases (GHG) such as methane, nitrous oxide, and volatile organic compounds (VOC)?	15
Answer “yes” if the EQIP CPO <u>includes</u> any of the following Conservation Practices: 366, 367, 380, 390, 391, 528, 550, 590, 612, 645, and 650.	
3c. Increase carbon sequestration?	5
Answer “yes” if the EQIP CPO <u>includes</u> any of the following Conservation Practices: 322, 329, 332, 340, 342, 345, 346, 380, 386, 391, 393, 422, 512, 528, 550, 589C, 603, 612, 635, 643, 644,650, 657, 658, and 659.	
4. High Quality, Productive Soils Erosion Reduction–Will the proposed project assist the producer to:	
4a. Reduce erosion to tolerable limits (Soil “T”)?	15
Answer “yes” if the EQIP CPO has conservation practices planned that will reduce all forms of erosion to the soil loss tolerance (T) of the predominant soil(s), on all fields in the offered area.	
5. Healthy Plant and Animal Communities Wildlife Habitat Conservation–Will the proposed project assist the producer to:	
5a. Benefit threatened and endangered, at–risk, candidate, or species of concern as identified in a state wildlife plan?	15
Award points if the EQIP CPO restores or enhances habitat for federally listed threatened and endangered species (T&E), at-risk, candidate, fish and wildlife species of concern. Refer to the electronic Field Office Technical Guide (eFOTG) ( <a href="http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/efotg/">http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/efotg/</a> ) for Kansas T&E and Species in Need of Conservation (SINC) species and the Kansas Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan ( <a href="http://www.kdwp.state.ks.us/news/Other-Services/Kansas-CWCP/Kansas-CWCP">http://www.kdwp.state.ks.us/news/Other-Services/Kansas-CWCP/Kansas-CWCP</a> ).	
5b. Retain wildlife and plant benefits on land exiting the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)?	15
Answer “yes” if the CRP contract expired and is still in permanent cover <u>OR</u> the contract will expire and be maintained as permanent cover.	

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6. High Quality, Productive Soils, Healthy Plant and Animal Communities: Special Environmental Efforts/Initiatives—Will the proposed project assist the producer to:	
6a. Eradicate or control noxious or invasive species?	10
Answer “yes” if the EQIP CPO <u>includes</u> either Conservation Practice 315 or 314 and targets noxious or invasive plant species (see Noxious and Invasive Species list link through eFOTG, Section II, or at: <a href="http://www.ksda.gov/plant_protection/content/349">http://www.ksda.gov/plant_protection/content/349</a> ).	
6b. Increase, improve, or establish pollinator habitat?	10
Answer “yes” if the EQIP CPO <u>includes</u> Conservation Practice 550—Range Planting or Conservation Practice 645—Upland Wildlife Habitat Management that involves the establishment of pollinator habitat. (NOTE: Conservation Practice 645 contains a specific payment scenario for pollinator habitat in the Kansas Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 payment schedule.)	
6c. Implement precision agricultural methods?	10
Answer “yes” if the EQIP CPO <u>includes</u> : Conservation Practice 590—Nutrient Management AND includes the following precision agricultural methods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Variable rate technologies (VRT) for nutrient application—Computer—controlled equipment that adjusts fertilizer applications based on soil maps, vegetative indexes, or yield maps, etc., used to create management zones. Nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P), and potassium (K) fertilizer will be applied according to Land Grant University recommendations in the management zones.</li> <li>• Yield monitoring systems—Yields in the field are measured using combine—mounted sensors or volume meters. A Global Positioning System (GPS) receiver mounted on the combine is required to correlate field location with yield to create a yield map.</li> <li>• Soil samples for nutrient analysis are taken based on soil management zones or on a maximum of a five—acre grid.</li> <li>• Base nitrogen application rates on a real time analysis of crop nitrogen needs. Examples include in season aerial photography and in field equipment based chlorophyll sensors.</li> <li>• Producer must have current soil tests for P and K (and N where applicable) that are no more than three years old.</li> </ul>	
6d. Properly dispose of animal carcasses?	5
Answer “yes” if the EQIP CPO <u>includes</u> Conservation Practice: 316.	
6e. Implement an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) plan?	5
Answer “yes” if EQIP CPO includes Conservation Practice 595 and IPM techniques and procedures are followed.	
7. Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy Production—Will the proposed project assist the producer to:	
7a. Reduce energy consumption on the agricultural operation?	15
Answer “yes” if the EQIP CPO <u>includes</u> any of the following Conservation Practices: 102, 329, 345, 346, 441, 442, 449, and 590.	

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7b. Increase on–farm energy efficiency with more efficient equipment?	10
Answer “yes” if the producer will update/add equipment and technologies that will increase on-farm energy efficiency during the contract period (see On-Farm Energy Estimator: <a href="http://ecat.sc.egov.usda.gov/">http://ecat.sc.egov.usda.gov/</a> ).	
7c. Assist in implementing energy conservation measures that reduce emissions from GHGs and air pollutants.	10
Answer “yes” if the CPO <u>includes</u> any of the following Conservation Practices: 372, 328, 340, 374, 449, 533, 345, 329, 346, and 380.	
8. Business Lines–Conservation Implementation Additional Ranking Considerations–Will the proposed project result in:	
8a. Implementation of all planned conservation practices within three years of contract obligation?	10
Answer “yes” if the planned practices in the EQIP CPO are scheduled to be completed within three years of the obligation date.	
8b. Improvement of existing conservation practices or conservation systems already in place at the time the application is accepted, or will complete an existing conservation system?	10
Answer “yes” to the question.	
9. Does the applicant meet the following conditions:	
9a. If the applicant has an existing EQIP contract, has it been, and is it now, on schedule and in full compliance?	5
Answer “yes” to this question if ALL of the applicant(s) have an existing EQIP contract and they have always been in full compliance. “Full compliance” includes that the participant has never been behind schedule on any planned practices.	
9b. Did the applicant successfully complete any past contract(s) in full compliance?	5
Answer “yes” to this question if ALL of the applicant(s) successfully completed an EQIP contract in full compliance.	
9c. Is this the applicant’s first EQIP application?	5
Answer “yes” to this question if this is the first application for ALL applicant(s).	
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>250</b>