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# NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## USDA extends Conservation Stewardship Program cut-off date to January 27

AMHERST, Mass. (January 18, 2012) – The United States Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has announced that the cut-off date for the current Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) ranking period has been extended to **January 27, 2012**. Farmers who maintain a high level of conservation on their land and agree to adopt higher levels of stewardship are eligible for CSP payments.

“We want to make sure that people who would like to be considered for CSP during this first ranking period have the time they need to complete their applications,” Christine Clarke, NRCS Massachusetts State Conservationist said. “I encourage interested Massachusetts farmers to apply at their local NRCS office as soon as they can.”

Farmers should visit their local USDA service center to apply; locations are listed on-line at <http://offices.usda.gov> or in the phone book under Federal Government, U.S. Department of Agriculture. General program information is available on the NRCS Massachusetts website at [www.ma.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.ma.nrcs.usda.gov).

CSP is offered in all 50 states, tribal lands and the Pacific and Caribbean areas through continuous sign-ups. Administered by NRCS, CSP provides many conservation benefits including improved water and soil quality, enhanced wildlife habitat and conservation activities that address the effects of climate change.

Farmers are encouraged to apply for CSP throughout the year to be considered for current and future application ranking periods. Those who apply by January 27, 2012, may be eligible for current available funding. Eligible lands include cropland, pastureland, rangeland and nonindustrial forestland.

A CSP self-screening checklist is available to help farmers determine if CSP is suitable for their operation. The checklist highlights basic information about CSP eligibility requirements, contracts obligations and potential payments. It is available from local NRCS offices and at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/csp>.

NRCS has offices in Greenfield, Hadley, Holden, Hyannis, Pittsfield, Westford, and West Wareham, which work with local conservation districts and other partners to serve farmers and landowners throughout the commonwealth.

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**NOTE TO EDITORS/REPORTERS:** If you would like to include local contact information, please see the following list for the office that serves your area.

# USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Field Offices

## **BARNSTABLE FIELD OFFICE**

270 Communications Way, Unit 1G  
Hyannis, MA 02601  
508-771-6476  
Serving **Cape Cod and the Islands**

## **GREENFIELD FIELD OFFICE**

55 Federal Street, Room 290  
Greenfield, MA 01301  
413-772-0384 ext 3  
Serving **Franklin County**

## **HADLEY FIELD OFFICE**

195 Russell Street, Suite B6  
Hadley, MA 01035  
413-585-1000 ext 3  
Serving **Hampden and Hampshire counties**

## **HOLDEN FIELD OFFICE**

52 Boyden Road, Room 10  
Holden, MA 01520  
508-829-4477 ext 3  
Serving **Worcester County**

## **PITTSFIELD FIELD OFFICE**

78 Center Street, Suite 206,  
Pittsfield, MA 01201  
413-443-1776 ext 3  
Serving **Berkshire County**

## **WESTFORD FIELD OFFICE**

319 Littleton Road, Suite 205  
Westford, MA 01886  
978-692-1904 ext 3  
Serving Essex, **Middlesex and Suffolk counties**

## **WEST WAREHAM FIELD OFFICE**

15 Cranberry Highway  
West Wareham, MA 02576  
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