

Georgia

Small Scale/Limited Resource Farmer Initiative

Overview

The purpose of the Small Scale and Limited Resource Farmer Initiative (SSLRI) is to increase technical assistance and program participation in all USDA programs through improved outreach efforts to Small Scale and Limited Resource Farmers.

The target audience is defined as small farmers who have historically not participated in or never ranked high enough to receive financial assistance.

Eligibility

Funds will help participants who own and/or operate (rent) a total of 100 acres or less of cropland and/or pastureland.

Incidental woodlot acres of up to 20 acres will be allowed as part of the total acreage.

Bonus ranking points will be given to any producer that agrees to put 10 percent or more of their planted cropland acres into alternative crops and/or if they are producing alternative livestock.

Alternative Crops

Alternative crops are not traditional crops such as cotton, soybeans, peanuts, grain sorghum, field corn, wheat or similar crops grown on large acreage and produced for off-farm sales.

Alternative cropping enterprises include assorted vegetables, blueberries, field grown flowers, greenhouse production and melons. Alternative livestock enterprises include goats, pastured poultry, sheep, Ostriches and buffalo. Additional information on alternative crops can be found at http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/AFSIC_pubs/altlist.htm or contact your local NRCS office.

Contract Limitations

Contracts will be limited to \$15,000 per contract. Cost-share rates will be 75% for small scale farmers and up to 90 % for those producers that qualify as Limited Resource Producers for all practices.

These cost-share rates will be based on the average state cost and not on actual cost.

All participants must be registered in the Service Center Information Management System (SCIMS) or grant permission to be registered in SCIMS.

Who Can Apply?

Applicants:

- Are agricultural producers who have a minimum of \$1000 in agricultural products produced and/or sold for 2 of the past 5 years or IRS Schedule F form showing profit or loss from the farm operation.

The producer will be allowed to self-certify.

- must own or have control of the land (lease, rent, etc.) for term of contract.
- must be actively engaged in the farming operation.
- can be an individual, entity or joint operation.
- with pastureland must be willing to follow a prescribed grazing plan in order to qualify for grazing practices, i.e. fencing, watering facilities, wells, etc.

Small Scale Farmer

A Small Scale Farmer in Georgia is defined as:

- (a) A farmer with 100 acres or less cropland or pastureland and
- (b) has income limits of less than \$ 45,000 based on the last 2 years of income tax returns. The producer will self-certify.

Limited Resource Farmer

A Limited Resource Farmer is defined as:

- (a) A farmer who in each of the past two years has had a direct or indirect GROSS FARM INCOME SALES of less than or equal to \$113,600.00 per year

Gross Farm Sales is defined as Gross Income entered on IRS Form 1040, Schedule F, in the Farm Income Section.

and

- (b) In each of the past two years, the Total Household Income less than “County Area Value.”

Total Household Income is defined as Adjusted Gross Income for all members in your household or the amount you entered on IRS Form 1040, Adjusted Gross Income Section.

County/Area Value is calculated as the higher of the National Poverty Level or 50% of the County/Area Median Household Income.

Actual dollar value for Gross Farm Income Sales and County Area Value for individual counties can be obtained from the Limited Resource Farmer Self-Certification Site.

<http://www.lrftool.sc.egov.usda.gov/>

The resource concerns to be addressed in Georgia are:

- Water Quantity—water management and irrigation
- Grazing Land Management
- Cropland Erosion
- Forestry/Woodland Management
- Water Quality—nutrient and pest management

A preset average state cost list will be used when developing contracts.

Small Scale and Limited Resource Farmer Practices:

Below is a list of conservation practices that are designed for small scale conservation:

- *Prescribed Grazing*
- *Well*
- *Spring Development*
- *Stream Crossing*
- *Irrigation Water Conveyance Low-Pressure, Underground, Plastic Pipeline*
- *Irrigation Water Management*
- *Nutrient and Pest Management*
- *Filter Strips, Field Borders, and Riparian Forest Buffers*
- *Contour Farming*
- *Cover Crop*
- *Sediment Control Basin, Grade Stabilization Structure, and Grassed Waterways*
- *Forest Stand Improvement*

CCC-36 Form

NRCS may assist participants in completing and using the **CCC-36 Form**, Assignment of Payment, for conservation work and services provided under the Small Scale Farmer contracts.

All other practices and average cost share rates as noted in FOTG will apply. Individuals are encouraged to apply for other practices under the General EQIP sign-up.

For more information on other conservation programs, please visit us on the web at www.ga.nrcs.usda.gov