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Applications must be received by January 21, 2011 for this funding cycle.

STATEWIDE SIGN-UP FOR THE NEW CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM EXTENDED

ATHENS, GA (January 14, 2011) — James E. Tillman, Sr., State Conservationist for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Georgia today announced the ranking period cut-off date for the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) has been extended to January 21, 2011. Producers interested in CSP should submit applications to their local NRCS Office by the deadline so that their applications can be considered during the first ranking period of 2011.

The program provides many conservation benefits including improvement of water and soil quality, wildlife habit enhancements and adoption of conservation activities that address the effects of climate change.

Producers are encouraged to apply for CSP throughout the year to be considered for current and future application ranking periods. Those producers who apply by the deadline may be eligible for current available funding. The program, authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill, offers payments to producers who maintain a high level of conservation on their land and agree to adopt higher levels of stewardship. Eligible lands include cropland, pastureland, rangeland and nonindustrial forestland.

A CSP self-screening checklist is available to help producers 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 or online at www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/new_CSP/CSP.html.

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