

For Immediate Release

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Sign-up Extended until May 16, 2012

USDA-NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS) EXPANDS PROJECT TO CONTROL PIGWEED ON COTTON CROPS

ATHENS, GA (April 19, 2012) – State Conservationist James Tillman, Sr., announced that USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Georgia will provide an additional \$1.1 million in financial incentives for the Pigweed Initiative to control glyphosate-resistant palmer amaranth, more commonly known as pigweed. Deadline for receiving applications has been extended and must be received by May 16, 2012 to be considered for funding. The project area has received approval for an additional expansion to now include the following counties:

Appling	Atkinson	Bacon	Baker	Ben Hill	Berrien
Bibb	Bleckley	Brooks	Burke	Calhoun	Coffee
Colquitt	Cook	Crawford	Decatur	Dodge	Dooly
Dougherty	Early	Emanuel	Irwin	Grady	Houston
Jeff Davis	Jefferson	Jenkins	Johnson	Lanier	Laurens
Lee	Lowndes	Macon	Miller	Mitchell	Montgomery
Peach	Pulaski	Quitman	Randolph	Schley	Seminole
Stewart	Sumter	Taylor	Tift	Telfair	Terrell
Thomas	Toombs	Turner	Twiggs	Washington	Webster
Wheeler	Wilcox	Worth			

“Just when boll weevil has all but disappeared, pigweed has come on strong. It makes kudzu look like a slow moving redwood tree, having spread from just one county in 2004 to 37 counties today and each plant produces hundreds of thousands of seeds. At present, pigweed costs Georgia producers more than \$100 million each year. This strategic investment will help identify ways to combat this costly pest and deliver savings to producers and consumers alike. I appreciate the Administration for identifying this funding and will continue working with the NRCS and with Congressman Bishop on this important issue,” said Congressman Jack Kingston, Chairman of the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee.

The project is being funded via the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and is targeted to cotton farmers. Pigweed is particularly troublesome to cotton crops. Congressmen

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Sanford Bishop, Jr., said, "Georgia is home to some of the world's strongest and most innovative cotton producers. In order to maintain and enhance their yield and increase their profit margins by retarding the spread of pigweed in their fields, it is extremely important that eligible cotton farmers in the designated counties will now have these additional resources, thanks to the NRCS pigweed resistance initiative."

This is a partnership project among the NRCS, the Georgia Cotton Commission and the UGA-Cooperative Extension Service. Participants will work with NRCS to design a conservation plan and agree to implement several practices that will assist with the control of the glyphosate-resistant pigweed.

General Criteria:

1. Participants must meet the regular EQIP eligibility requirements.
2. Individuals, groups of landowners or non-government organizations are eligible but must have evidence of control or ownership of land.
3. Payment rate will be up to \$75.00 per acre for two years.
4. The contracts are for three years with a minimum of 100.0 acres of cropland owned and a maximum of \$13,000 per contract.

Interested producers should contact their local USDA Service Center for additional information. More information is available at: www.ga.nrcs.usda.gov.

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