

United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

USDA NRCS
1203 College Park Drive
Suite 101
Dover, Delaware 19904
Phone: (302) 678-4180
Fax: (302) 678-0843
www.de.nrcs.usda.gov

Contact: Lester Stillson
(302) 678-4162
lester.stillson@de.usda.gov

Delaware Farmers Eligible for 5.3 Million Dollar USDA Conservation Program

Delaware farmers interested in applying conservation practices can apply now for financial assistance through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Agricultural producers interested in participating in EQIP can apply any time at their Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office located at the USDA Service Center. The initial ranking deadline for new applications is January 14, 2005 and subsequent applications will be ranked in batches at predetermined times throughout the year. NRCS will evaluate each application and give higher priority to those applications that address excess nutrients associated with livestock operations located in or close to environmentally sensitive areas.

EQIP offers up to 10 year contracts that provide financial incentives to install conservation practices. All EQIP activities must be carried out according to a conservation plan developed by producers with help from NRCS and conservation districts. EQIP pays up to 75 percent of the cost of eligible conservation practices, including waste storage structures, mortality composters, irrigation system conversions, concrete pads at the end of poultry houses, and poultry house windbreaks. There are also incentive payments for management practices such as cover crops, conservation tillage, nutrient management and pest management.

Total EQIP payments are limited to \$450,000 per individual or entity for the length of the current Farm Bill – 2002 through 2007. Producers interested in participating in the EQIP program should contact the Natural Resources Conservation Service at their county USDA Service Center or visit the Delaware NRCS web page at www.de.nrcs.usda.gov.

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