

Fact Sheet

June 2002

Environmental Quality Incentives Program

Overview

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a voluntary conservation program from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. It supports production agriculture and environmental quality as compatible goals. Through EQIP, farmers may receive financial and technical help with structural and management conservation practices on agricultural land.

EQIP was reauthorized in the 2002 Farm Bill and is administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

EQIP may pay up to 75 percent of the costs of eligible conservation practices. Incentive payments may be made to encourage a farmer to adopt land management practices, such as nutrient management, manure management, integrated pest management, and wildlife habitat management.

How EQIP Works

Signup and details about eligible practices and costshare rates will be announced later this winter. NRCS will evaluate each application, with higher priorities given to applications that use cost-effective conservation practices, address local priorities, and provide the most environmental benefit.

Farmers will develop a conservation plan, if they don't already have one, for the acreage affected by the EQIP practices. Conservation practices must meet NRCS technical standards. Farmers may elect to use an approved third-party provider for technical assistance, if available.

State Technical Committees and Local Working Groups advise NRCS on setting priorities and limits for EQIP

About 20 percent of the EQIP funds will be targeted to animal waste storage systems. Farmers would receive up to 70% costsharing on storage structures, depending on size. Contracts for waste storage will require a comprehensive nutrient management plan (CNMP).

EQIP offers contracts for practice implementation from 1-10 years. These contracts provide incentive payments and cost share payments for implementing conservation practices.

Eligibility

Any farmer engaged in livestock or crop production on eligible land may apply for EQIP. Eligible land includes cropland; rangeland; pasture; private non-industrial forestland; and other farm or ranch lands, as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture.

For More Information

If you need more information about EQIP, please contact NRCS at your local USDA Service Center, or your local land conservation department. Information also is available on the World Wide Web at:

<http://www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip.asp>



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