



2010 Annual Report

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

Historically Underserved Farmers and Ranchers

This report contains fiscal year activity for the state of Colorado from the time period of October 2009 to September 2010.

Fiscal Year 2010 Historically Underserved Farmers and Ranchers Statewide Activities

Number of Contracts Approved.....	212
Dollar Amount Approved.....	\$7.1 Million
Acres Treated	124,368

Who We Are

NRCS provides technical and financial assistance to help agricultural producers and others care for the land. NRCS has six mission goals that include high quality, productive soils; clean and abundant water; healthy plant and animal communities; clean air; an adequate energy supply; and working farms and ranchlands.

Vision

Productive Lands -
 Healthy Environment

Mission

Helping People Help the Land

“Many 2008 Farm Bill programs provide up to 90 percent of costs for socially disadvantaged, limited-resource, and beginning farmers or ranchers associated with planning and implementing conservation measures.”

Resource Conservationist

The Program

The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill) continues to address the unique circumstances and concerns of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, as well as beginning and limited resource farmers and ranchers.

It provides for voluntary participation, offers incentives, and focuses on equity in accessing U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs and services.

Enhancements include streamlined delivery of technical and financial assistance; improved programs and services; and flexibility in decision making (with most decisions made at the Tribal, State, or local level).

Definitions

Beginning Farmer or Rancher

A Beginning Farmer or Rancher means an individual or entity who:

- a. Has not operated a farm or ranch, or who has operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10 consecutive years. This requirement applies to all members of an entity,
- b. Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm or ranch.

Socially Disadvantaged

A socially disadvantaged group is a group whose members have been subject to racial or ethnic prejudice because of their identity as members of a group, without regard to their individual qualities. These groups consist of the following:

- American Indians or Alaskan Natives
- Asians
- Blacks or African Americans
- Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders
- Hispanics

Gender alone is not a covered group for the purposes of NRCS conservation programs.

A socially disadvantaged applicant is an individual or entity who is a member of a socially disadvantaged group. For an entity, at least 50 percent ownership in the farm business must be held by socially disadvantaged individuals.

Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher

A Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher or Forest Owner is an applicant:

- a. With direct or indirect gross farm sales not more than the current indexed value in each of the previous 2 years, and
- b. Who has a total household income at or below the national poverty level for a family of four, or less than 50 percent of county median household income in each of the previous two years.

Fiscal Year 2010

Historically Underserved Farmers and Ranchers Program

An entity or joint operation can be a Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher if all individual members independently qualify.

Legislative Changes

The 2008 Farm Bill authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to set aside:

- 5 percent of available Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) funds to assist beginning farmers or ranchers and 5 percent to assist socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers; and
- 5 percent of available Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) acres to assist beginning farmers or ranchers and 5 percent to assist socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers. The Secretary is authorized to “repool” unused funds and acres set aside for these groups and make them available to all applicants.

The 2008 Farm Bill also authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to provide up to 90 percent of the costs associated with planning and implementing conservation measures for socially disadvantaged and beginning farmers or ranchers. In addition, up to 30 percent of such payments may be provided in advance for purchasing materials or contracting.

Title II of the 2008 Farm Bill defines a socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher as *“a member of a socially disadvantaged group whose members have been subjected to racial or ethnic prejudice because of their identity as members of the group without regard to their individual qualities.”* This is a change from the definition used by USDA under the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, which also includes gender in the definition.

For More Information

Visit our web site at www.co.nrcs.usda.gov.