

# Conservation Stewardship Program



## for Dairy Producers

**Have you ever looked across your land and thought about some operational management goals you would like to take to the next level? Maybe we can help.**

No one knows more about your land than you do, and no one knows more about conservation than we do. Together we can develop a plan tailored to your operation and your goals to help you increase productivity and protect the value of your land.

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) offers an opportunity for dairy producers to enhance their agricultural operations while adopting conservation activities that can reduce energy use, improve soil health, and improve

water quality. CSP can help you plan and implement conservation practices and enhancements that address natural resource concerns on your operation.

### What's new?

Dairy producers continue to benefit from all that CSP has to offer. There are a number of enhancements applicable to dairy production. Examples of enhancement options available to dairy producers are nutrient management activities to enhance air quality, buffers to enhance water quality and water management activities.

The new CSP provides adaptive management options to better respond to market and weather conditions, allowing participants to choose enhancements, or bundles of enhancements, that best fit their unique circumstances.

### Is CSP for you?

CSP helps you build on your existing conservation efforts while strengthening your operation. Whether you are looking to reduce concentration of nutrients, implement prescribed grazing, or develop wildlife habitat, we can custom design a CSP plan to help you meet those goals. We can help you with drainage water management, apply treated manure to your land, or schedule cover crop planting that utilizes residual nitrogen. If you are already taking steps to improve the condition of the land, chances are CSP can help you find new ways to meet your goals. CSP contracts are for five years, with the option to renew.

### Types of Assistance

NRCS provides free technical assistance to all agricultural producers. To participate in CSP and receive financial assistance, producers must control or own the land and be in compliance with highly erodible land and wetland conservation requirements, and have current farm records with USDA Farm Service Agency. Learn more at [www.nrcs.usda.gov/farmbill](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/farmbill).

### Where can I get more info?

To learn more about CSP opportunities, dairy producers should contact their local USDA service center and set up an appointment with NRCS staff. A Local Service Center Directory is available online at [www.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov), then click "Contact Us." You can also visit our CSP page online at [www.nrcs.usda.gov/CSP](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/CSP).



**Natural  
Resources  
Conservation  
Service**

[nrcs.usda.gov](http://nrcs.usda.gov)



## CSP Enhancements to assist Dairy Producers

(This is not an exhaustive list.)

### Livestock and Wildlife

- Manage Livestock Access to Water Sources
- Wildlife Corridors
- Grazing Management to Improve Wildlife
- Forage Harvest Management
- Bird Habitat
- Pollinator and/or Beneficial Insect Habitat

### Nutrient & Pest Management

- Precision Pesticide Application
- Enhancements to Reduce the Concentration of Nutrients
- Drainage Water Management
- Herbaceous Weed Control
- Land Application of Treated Manure
- Use Non-chemical Methods to Terminate Cover Crops

### Pastureland

- Native Grasses or Legumes Planting
- Prescribed Grazing
- Enhancements to Improve Plant Productivity and Health
- Maintain Quantity and Quality of Forage
- Improve Nutrient Uptake and Efficiency
- Cover Crop Enhancements to Utilize Residual Nitrogen
- Enhancements to Use Natural Sources of Nitrogen (legumes, manure, compost)

### Natural Resources, Biodiversity & Buffers

- Add Food-Producing Trees and Shrubs to Existing Plantings
- Field Borders
- Riparian Buffers
- Filter Strips
- Critical Area Plantings

## FAQ

## frequently asked questions

### How can I find out if I am eligible?

The best way to determine eligibility is to contact your [local field office](#). You must meet Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) requirements and have a Farm Tract Number with FSA. Land already enrolled in some USDA Farm Bill programs, such as CRP and some easement programs, may not be eligible.

### Is there a minimum number of acres needed

### to be enrolled?

No, but entire operation must be enrolled.

### Is there a minimum contract payment?

Yes, \$1,500 annually.

### What are “resource concerns?”

NRCS conservation specialists conduct resource inventories on agricultural land to evaluate natural resources including soil, water, air, plant, and animal resource bases to determine their condition. If there

is a cause or threat to that resource, that can result in what we refer to as a resource concern. Examples of resource concerns are erosion, degraded water quality, and plant health.

### What are “enhancements?”

Enhancements are management activities that go above and beyond the minimum practice requirements helping the producer achieve a higher level of conservation.

### What are “bundles?”

Bundles are suites of conservation enhancements designed to address multiple resource concerns. Bundle options are offered at a higher payment rate.

### Do I have options to pick the enhancements that are best suited for my operation?

Yes. The variety of CSP practices that are offered give you a lot of freedom to select enhancements that help you meet your management goals.

