



Natural Resources
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News Release

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Federal Financial Assistance Available to New Hampshire Farmers and Forest Landowners Under the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill)

Article announces next application cut-off date for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP), and Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) program; explains programs, offers next steps for interested reader.

Durham, New Hampshire, November 21, 2013 — Agriculture or forest landowners in New Hampshire:

If you are interested in protecting, conserving, or restoring the natural resources on your property through technical or financial assistance, contact your local USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) field office to begin the conservation planning process.

Once an NRCS Conservation Plan is developed, you can work with NRCS to determine which programs would best suit your conservation needs. Applications for NRCS programs and initiatives (see below for details) may be submitted at any time year-round; however, the **next application cut-off date is January 10, 2014**. In order for your application to be considered in the February 21st ranking, landowners/operators must submit a complete application packet (including eligibility paperwork) by January 10, 2014. Subsequent application cut-off dates may be announced, if funding becomes available.

Applicants must be eligible in the USDA Farm Service Agency's (FSA) system by February 21, 2014 to be considered in this round. If your landowner eligibility has not yet been cleared by USDA, you are strongly advised to get your landowner eligibility documentation submitted to your USDA Service Center as soon as possible, because it may take several weeks to clear eligibility in order for your application to be ranked.

“NRCS conservation programs help farmers and forest landowners promote stewardship and environmental quality on farm and forest land, address water quality and quantity challenges, and protect valuable wetland ecosystems, agricultural lands, and wildlife

habitat,” said Rick Ellsmore, NRCS State Conservationist for New Hampshire. “NRCS conservation professionals will discuss with you your conservation objectives, help you identify resource concerns, and suggest options and alternatives for treatment. We will also identify conservation programs that may provide you with financial assistance for the implementation of many conservation practices.”

Examples of eligible lands in New Hampshire include privately owned:

- Agricultural land
- Grasslands
- Non-industrial private forest lands
- Freshwater wetlands and salt marshes
- Coastal habitats, and rivers and streams

Emphasis areas in New Hampshire are:

- Livestock and grazing issues
- Cropland – including orchards, specialty crops, high tunnel and greenhouse operations
- Forestry
- Organic Agriculture
- Fish and Wildlife Habitat – including native pollinator habitat
- Energy Conservation

The 2008 Farm Bill, provides higher payments for land owners who qualify as beginning farmers, limited resource producers, or those who are “socially disadvantaged” because they belong to racial or ethnic groups that have historically been subjected to prejudice. Such landowners could receive up to 90 percent of the estimated incurred costs associated with planning and implementing conservation measures. However, Farm Bill program policy is subject to change.

- [Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#) (EQIP) – Through EQIP, farmers may receive financial and technical help with structural and management conservation practices on agricultural and forest land. EQIP in New Hampshire offers financial assistance to help off-set the costs of eligible conservation practices.
- [Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program](#) (WHIP) – This program provides assistance to landowners who want to improve fish and wildlife habitat or restore natural ecosystems on their land.
- [Agricultural Management Assistance Program](#) (AMA) – This program provides assistance to agricultural producers to voluntarily address issues such as water management, water quality, and erosion control by incorporating conservation into their farming operations.

NRCS [field offices](#) are located in Concord, Conway, Epping, Lancaster, Milford, Orford, and Walpole. NRCS works with local conservation districts and other partners to serve farmers and landowners throughout the state.

Field Office telephone numbers are:

Concord: 603-223-6023

Conway: 603-447-2771

Epping: 603-679-1587

Lancaster: 603-788-4651

Milford: 603-673-2409

Orford: 603-353-4651

Walpole: 603-756-2988

Contact your local office for more information. General program information is available on the NRCS New Hampshire website at www.nh.nrcs.usda.gov.

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