Environmental Quality Incentives Program
Conservation Incentive Contracts

Overview

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a voluntary conservation program administered by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) that offers farmers, ranchers, and nonindustrial private forest landowners financial and technical assistance to help plan and implement conservation practices and activities on working agricultural and forestry landscapes.

What Are EQIP Conservation Incentive Contracts?

Incentive contracts are an option available through EQIP that offers producers financial assistance to adopt conservation management practices on working landscapes. Producers may use incentive contracts as a "steppingstone" from correcting resource issues on specific land units through EQIP to achieving sustainable stewardship on their entire operation.

Conservation Incentive Contracts are available nationwide and help producers address priority resource concerns, like sequestering carbon and improving water quality in high-priority areas.

Incentive contracts now offers new conservation evaluation and monitoring activities (CEMA) to help report outcomes of practices.

Key Incentive Contract Features

Incentive contracts:

- Require producers to address at least one priority resource concern during the contract period.

- Have an initial length of five years.

- Have a payment limitation of $200,000 for the life of the 2018 Farm Bill which expires in 2023.

Other details include:
- Offers two types of payments:
  - Implementation payments, which are paid after certification of practice.
  - Annual payments, which include management practices that will serve as annual payments and are paid as soon as practicable, after October 1 of each fiscal year.
- NRCS offers higher payment rates and advance payments to historically underserved (HU) producers who implement conservation practices in an EQIP Conservation Incentive Contract. HU producers include Beginning Farmers, Socially Disadvantaged Farmers, Limited Resource Farmers, and Veterans.

Get Started with USDA

USDA provides technical assistance at no cost to agricultural and forestry producers from more than 2,300 USDA Service Centers across the nation. Our Service Centers are currently open for business, including those that restrict in-person visits or require appointments. Contact your local **NRCS Alaska Service Center** to make an appointment with a conservation planner and to determine your next steps.

Visit **NRCS Alaska's Financial Assistance webpage** to learn more about programs available to private landowners in Alaska.

How to Apply

NRCS accepts applications for EQIP year-round, however producers and landowners should apply by state-specific signup dates to be considered for each year's funding. To apply, producers should contact their local **NRCS Alaska Service Center**

Who Is Eligible?

Farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners who own or lease agricultural land may be eligible. EQIP assistance can be used on many types of operations, including, but not limited to:

- Conventional and organic

- Specialty crops and commodity crops

- Forestry and wildlife

- Livestock operations

FY2023 EQIP-CIC Eligible Practices

CODE	ASSET	UNITS	LIFESPAN
328	Conservation Crop Rotation	Ac	1
329	Residue and Tillage Management, No Till	Ac	1
340	Cover Crop	Ac	1
345	Residue and Tillage Management, Reduced Till	Ac	1
373	Dust Control on Unpaved Roads and Surfaces	SqFt	1
449	Irrigation Water Management	Ac	1
484	Mulching	Ac	1
511	Forage Harvest Management	Ac	1
528	Prescribed Grazing	Ac	1
590	Nutrient Management	Ac	1
595	Pest Management Conservation System	Ac	1
633	Waste Recycling	No	1
644	Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management	Ac	1
645	Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	Ac	1
647	Early Successional Habitat Development-Mgt	Ac	1
207	Site Assessment and Soil Testing for Containments Activity	No	1
216	Soil Health Testing	No	1
217	Soil and Source Testing For Nutrient Management	No	1
218	Carbon Sequestration and Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Assessment	No	1
228	Agricultural Energy Assessment	No	1

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