

## Organic Training

The North Dakota Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) field staff have a need to provide technical and financial assistance to Organic Farmers through Farm Bill programs but have limited amount of experience working with organic production systems. This program is designed to provide organic farm management and techniques training to North Dakota NRCS field staff at four locations within North Dakota. A local provider has a combination of experiences and skills which make him uniquely qualified to provide this training. He has experience as an educator, 35 years experience as an organic farmer, 12 years experience as a Soil Conservation District Board member, and 27 years of experience in organic certification.



## High Tunnel Training

North Dakota NRCS has requested training on High Tunnel Construction and Production techniques to be delivered in three locations to NRCS staff and additional training sessions to be delivered to producers enrolled in NRCS programs. Entrepreneurial Center for Horticulture (ECH) would provide training, having hands on experience in High Tunnel Production teaching horticulture and agriculture, small business development, economic development, and applied research. The ECH would provide three 6-hour training sessions for NRCS personnel as well as provide training to producers/farmers.

## TOP 10 CONSERVATION PRACTICES

1. **FENCE (Facilitates prescribed grazing)**  
1.49 million feet
2. **WINDBREAK/SHELTERBELT ESTABLISHMENT**  
1.32 million feet
3. **LIVESTOCK PIPELINE (Facilitates prescribed grazing)**  
595 thousand feet
4. **CONSERVATION CROP ROTATION**  
573 thousand acres
5. **WINDBREAK/SHELTERBELT RENOVATION**  
436 thousand feet
6. **NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT**  
272 thousand acres
7. **RESIDUE AND TILLAGE MANAGEMENT, NO-TILL**  
230 thousand acres
8. **INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT (IPM)**  
221 thousand acres
9. **PRESCRIBED GRAZING**  
185 thousand acres
10. **RESIDUE AND TILLAGE MANAGEMENT, REDUCED-TILL**  
149 thousand acres

## THE NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS)



Provides agriculture producers and private landowners with locally led assistance to help them implement voluntary conservation practices that protect our State's natural resources while maintaining production and economic opportunities.

In Fiscal year 2016, North Dakota NRCS planned or applied 148 different conservation practices and resource enhancements to treat a series of resource concerns ranging from wind erosion to soil health. These practices and enhancements will treat over **1.9 million acres of cropland, rangeland, and pastureland**. NRCS programs and technical assistance was provided to over 2,800 producers in the State.



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# FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

## ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM

EQIP provides financial assistance to agricultural producers in order to address natural resource concerns and deliver environmental benefits such as improved water and air quality, conserved ground and surface water, reduced water, reduce soil erosion and sedimentation or improved or created wildlife habitat.

**\$17 million**  
261 thousand acres  
570 contracts

## CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

The CSP Program helps agricultural producers maintain and improve their existing conservation systems and adopt additional conservation activities to address priority resources concerns. Participants earn CSP payments for conservation performance - the higher the performance, the higher the payment.

**\$5.3 million**  
241 thousand acres  
169 contracts

*Renewals:*  
**\$6.9 million**  
476 thousand acres  
223 contracts

## REGIONAL CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

RCCP promotes coordination between NRCS and its partners to deliver conservation assistance to producers and landowners. NRCS provides assistance to producers through partnership agreements and through program contracts or easement agreements.

3 RCCP state proposals were asked to turn in a full proposal. Resource concerns include:

- Water Quality
- Grassland Improvement
- Windbreak Development

All 3 have local SCD involvement

## IMPLEMENTING 2015 RCCP

**Red River Retention Authority**  
Approved in 2014 for 12 million. After removing administrative costs, 11 million remains for the development of watershed plans. 19 approved water resource districts/watershed plans, of that 8 are in ND and 11 in MN. One more in MN awaiting approval. Average watershed plan cost is 500 thousand in technical assistance.

*How far north - 49th Parallel:*  
**\$69 thousand**  
280 acres  
7 contracts

*Medora Grazing Association:*  
**\$60 thousand**  
27 thousand acres  
2 contracts

## WATER BANK

**\$2.9 million**  
75 hundred acres  
48 contracts

## EASEMENTS

### Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

ACEP provides financial and technical assistance to help conserve agriculture lands and wetlands and their related benefits.

**\$4.1 million**  
34 hundred acres  
19 contracts

# CONSERVATION PLANNING

A National effort to improve the quality of conservation planning being delivered by NRCS and partner conservation planners is currently underway. This effort includes establishment of a National conservation planner database. The database is to be used by national headquarters and State offices to aid in determining staff resources available to perform conservation planning, determine training needs and assist in policy development. North Dakota currently has 175 individuals certified as conservation planners at various levels:

## Conservation Planning Designations

### Apprentice Conservation Planner

The apprentice conservation planner role will be a new planner or be in a position that does not require conservation planning as a major part of their job duties.

### Certified Conservation Planner

The certified conservation planner role will be required for all NRCS or partner employees that have conservation planning as a major part of their job duties

### Master Certified Planner

This role can lead area wide conservation planning efforts within the state, lead conservation planning training efforts and lead quality control reviews and spot checks.

CONSERVATION TOOLS

\$1.5 million invested in Lidar

AGREEMENTS

35 SCD Agreements equaling a 584 thousand dollar investment into the land

### Soil Health

North Dakota NRCS participated in over 50 Soil Health events in FY16, sharing the soil health message with more than 4,000 people in the state.

HELPING PEOPLE HELP THE LAND