**Dakota Farm Talk - Water Bank Program**

**Pam Geppert**

The Natural Resources Conservation Service in the Prairie Pothole Region of the Upper Midwest has been granted funds toward landowner enrollment in the Water Bank program. NRCS Easement Program Manager in South Dakota, Brandon Kottke explains.

**Brandon Kottke**

Basically, what the program is designated for is looking for crop ground that has been affected by flooding. So basically, if someone has wet areas out there that they previously crop and haven't been able to get to them for a few years, it's something that is designated to help them out with those areas.

**Pam Geppert**

The Water Bank program is a rental contract, not an easement program. Rental rates for water bank contracts are $50 per acre for cropland and $35 per acre for pasture and non-cropped wetlands.

**Brandon Kottke**

It is a ten-year annual payment contract with the NRCS. Though it's just ten-year rental agreements, we've got a few areas in South Dakota that have seen quite a bit of moisture. So, it's a program, I guess, that's designated to help those folks out.

**Pam Geppert**

Kottke encourages landowners with problem wet areas to visit with local planners to explore their options.

**Brandon Kottke**

That's kind of the nice thing about stopping in and visiting with planners. You know, if they look at this and find out that it's not for them or they're not eligible, there may be other programs out there that the landowner can visit with them about. Whether that be the EQIP program or CSP or maybe even other programs.

**Pam Geppert**

Applications for the water bank program are available at any NRCS field office. The open enrollment period for Water Bank application ends June 10th. For greater details, contact the NRCS at any USDA service center. I'm Pam Geppert reporting for the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Helping people help the land.