

NRCS Tennessee AT-A-GLANCE



January 2024

FY 2023 Conservation... By the Numbers

The Tennessee Department of Agriculture provided **\$11.3 million** from the Agricultural Resources Conservation Fund for installation of Best Management Practices.

NRCS provided technical assistance in planning, engineering, or agronomic design and layout, and inspection of **2,205** Best Management Practices, which stabilized **106,000** acres.

114,188 conservation practices planned, **57,031** implemented **2,307** conservation plans written on **402,162** acres

4,414 conservation plans applied on **724,805** acres

120,103 acres of practices applied to improve environmental quality in the Conservation Technical Assistance program

Obligated **\$7.5 million** in **205** contracts on **94,777** acres in cover crops

42.3 percent of Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) funding and **15 percent** of Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) funding obligated to contracts with beginning farmers

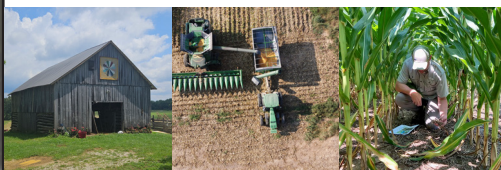
54 percent of EQIP funding totaling **\$22.7 million** obligated to **653** contracts with historically underserved customers

39 contracts in **53** Strikeforce counties in Tennessee totaling **\$2.4 million** on **2,366** acres

Funded **74** contracts on **7,121** acres totaling **\$3.8 million** through the EQIP Landscape Conservation Initiatives

Expended **\$2 million** in Emergency Watershed Protection Program funds for erosion control and debris removal caused by flooding

Closed **6** Agricultural Conservation Easement Program-Wetland Reserve Easements totaling **\$4.8 million** on **1,461** acres



NRCS Tennessee greatly appreciates our partnerships with the 95 Soil and Water Conservation Districts in Tennessee, which includes Tennessee's Association of Conservation Districts, Department of Agriculture, Conservation District Employees Association, Resource Conservation and Development Councils, and many others. Without them, we would not be able to reach our farmers and landowners to implement conservation systems through our voluntary programs on private lands in the state.

FY 23 Accomplishments

NRCS Tennessee continues to move the agency mission forward through voluntary Farm Bill conservation programs. Our employees and district partners and others have done a tremendous job with the delivery and implementation of our conservation efforts to producers in Tennessee.

In FY 2023, NRCS Tennessee:

- Processed **4,507** payments to Tennessee producers in the amount of **\$38,510,342**.
- Led the southeast region on applied acres reported to improve soil quality on **130,000** acres through the EQIP.
- Obligated **\$2.2 million** in seasonal high tunnels for **175** contracts.
- Completed **100 percent** monitoring on **375** easements.
- **16.0 percent** of EQIP funding went to socially disadvantaged producers.
- Exceeded the national target of **50 percent** of livestock and **10 percent** of wildlife. Tennessee achieved **57 percent** for livestock and **17 percent** for wildlife.
- Received a total of **14** proposals for competitive funded agreements in FY2023 in the categories of conservation, urban conservation, and easement restoration. Of the **14** proposals received, **eight** proposals were selected for a total funding more than **\$4.2 million**.
- Tennessee graduated **five** employees in the second class of the Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee Southeast Leadership Development Program. This program provides a unique developmental opportunity to prepare NRCS employees for positions of greater responsibility.
- Tennessee hosted **22** student interns in three different programs.
- Obligated **\$5.3 million** in CSP and **\$3.4 million** in EQIP Inflation Reduction Act financial assistance.



FY23 Program Highlights

Approximately **\$65 million** was obligated in Farm Bill funding and **\$20 million** in technical assistance to help Tennessee land users, units of local and state government, communities, and other federal agencies with planning and implementing conservation systems.

Farm Bill Program ¹	Obligated Funds	Number of Contracts	Total Acres
Environmental Quality Incentives Program	\$41.7M	1,168	113,970
Conservation Stewardship Program	\$19.3M ²	390	205,295
Regional Conservation Partnership Program	\$93,723	2	147
Agricultural Conservation Easement Program	\$3.9M	9 new agreements	1,178

¹ All programs also include funds, contracts, and acres funded through the Inflation Reduction Act.
² Total amount obligated for renewals and new FY2023 contracts.

Our Mission

We deliver conservation solutions so agricultural producers can protect natural resources and feed a growing world.

Our Vision

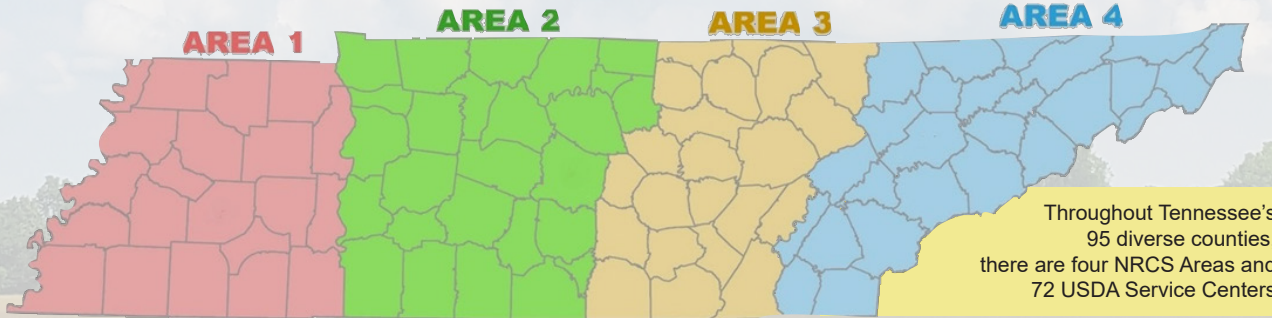
A world of clean and abundant water, healthy soils, resilient landscapes, and thriving agricultural communities through voluntary conservation.

Visit our website at: www.nrcs.usda.gov/tennessee



Helping People Help the Land

Tennessee State Map (NRCS Area Boundaries)



Throughout Tennessee's 95 diverse counties, there are four NRCS Areas and 72 USDA Service Centers

Who We Are...What We Do

Simply put—NRCS in Tennessee helps American farmers make conservation work for them through its science-based conservation planning and implementation. The system of practices we promote helps farmers improve production, reduce input costs, and conserve natural resources for the future. We also provide financial resources to help with the costs involved with getting conservation on the ground and improving soil health, water and air quality, and other natural resource benefits.

As of December 2023, there were **237** NRCS employees working in Tennessee throughout **72** USDA Service Centers in the state along with four area offices and the Nashville state office. In FY 2023, NRCS partnerships included **42** active contribution, cooperative, and grant agreements totaling **\$21.8 million** that supported **99** field positions.

Our Earth Team volunteers are instrumental in helping us put conservation on the ground with volunteers donating hundreds of hours of their time to help Tennessee NRCS in its volunteer efforts and meet its mission of helping people help the land. These dedicated volunteers work with our conservation partners on private lands to improve soil quality, conserve water, improve air quality, and enhance wildlife habitat.

NRCS is helping to ensure the health of our natural resources and the long-term sustainability of American agriculture. Our Conservation Technical Assistance program is the foundation of our financial and technical assistance delivery system. It provides land users with proven conservation technology needed to achieve the benefits of a healthy and productive landscape. According to numerous agricultural resources, Tennessee has roughly **26 million** acres of land, of which **89 percent** is privately owned. Furthermore, **11 million** acres — or **42 percent** — are farmlands.

Soil



About Our Programs...

Water



Environmental Quality Incentives Program offers financial and technical assistance to eligible producers to help install or implement conservation practices on eligible agricultural land.

Air



Conservation Stewardship Program helps agricultural producers maintain and improve their existing conservation systems and adopt additional conservation activities to address priority resource concerns.

Plants



Agricultural Conservation Easement Program This program provides financial and technical assistance to help conserve agricultural lands and wetlands and their related benefits. This program contains an Agricultural Land Easements and a Wetlands Reserve Easements component.

Animals



Regional Conservation Partnership Program is merit-based and targets specific vulnerable areas and is administered through partnership agreements and through program contracts or easement agreements.

Tennessee Goals

FY 2024

Implement 2018 Farm Bill



Increase participation in local work groups and State Technical Committee meetings



Expand conservation tools and support to address the unique needs of urban farmers and communities

Cultivate a complete and diverse workforce

Maintain the Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee Southeast Leadership Development Program

Expand our conservation partnerships

Promote and elevate climate-smart agriculture and forestry activities across Tennessee



Ensure equity in the delivery and implementation of all NRCS programs and services



Train and mentor NRCS employees and partners

Continue to be visible and tell our story