

Conservation Stewardship Program

Agricultural Producers



**Have you ever
looked across
your land and
thought about
operational
management
goals you would
like to take to
the next level?
Maybe we
can help.**

No one knows more about your land than you do, and no one knows more about conservation than we do. Together we can develop a plan tailored to your operation and your goals to help you increase productivity and protect the value of your land.

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) offers an opportunity for crop and livestock producers to enhance their agricultural operations while adopting conservation activities that

can improve plant structure and composition, address sheet and rill erosion, and improve feed and forage balance. CSP can help you plan and implement conservation practices and enhancements that address natural resource concerns on your operation.

What's New?

Agricultural producers continue to benefit from all that CSP has to offer. There are a number of enhancements that benefit agricultural production. Examples of enhancement options available to land owners and managers include forage and biomass plantings to increase organic matter to build soil health, or stockpiling cool season forage to improve structure and composition.

Is CSP for You?

CSP helps you build on your existing conservation efforts while strengthening your operation. Whether you are looking to plant cover crops to reduce soil erosion, or diversify the forage base, we can custom design a CSP plan to help you meet those goals. We can help you implement harvest techniques that reduce mortality to wildlife and forage testing to improved harvesting methods and hay quality. If you are already taking steps to improve the condition of the land, chances are CSP can help you find new ways to meet your goals. CSP contracts are for five years, with the option to renew for another five years.

Types of Assistance

NRCS provides free technical assistance to agricultural producers. To participate in CSP and receive financial assistance, producers must control or own the land and be in compliance with highly erodible land and wetland conservation requirements, and have current farm records with USDA Farm Service Agency. Learn more at www.nrcs.usda.gov/farmbill.

The Next Step

To learn more about CSP opportunities, producers should contact their local USDA service center and set up an appointment with NRCS staff. A Local Service Center Directory is available online at www.nrcs.usda.gov, then click "Contact Us." You can also visit our CSP page online at www.nrcs.usda.gov/CSP.



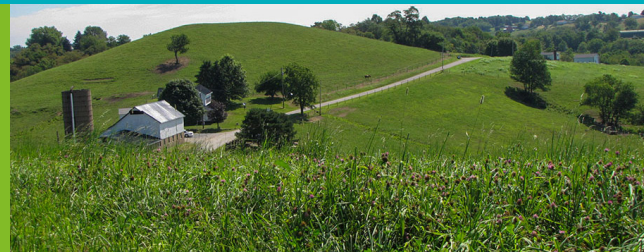
**Natural
Resources
Conservation
Service**

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Conservation Stewardship Program for Agricultural Producers

Common CSP Enhancements for Agricultural Producers

(This is not an exhaustive list)



Cover crop to reduce soil erosion E340A

Cover crop added to current crop rotation to reduce soil erosion from water and wind to below soil tolerance (T) level. Cover crops grown during critical erosion period(s). Species are selected that will have physical characteristics to provide adequate erosion protection.

Forage testing for improved harvesting methods and hay quality E511C

Dry hay forage samples are collected and analyzed following LGU procedures. Analysis results are kept and used to improve harvest decisions to guide forage supplementation of on-farm livestock to meet nutritional needs and improve health and productivity.

Forage and biomass planting to reduce soil erosion or increase organic matter to build soil health E512B

Establishing adapted and/or compatible species, varieties, or cultivars of herbaceous species suitable for pasture, hay, or biomass production that can provide for reduced soil erosion, improving soil health.

Stockpiling cool season forage to improve structure and composition or plant productivity and health E528F

Grazing management employed will stop grazing events of selected paddock(s) to allow pasture forages to grow to a maximum vegetative biomass accumulation before the end of the growing season.

Clipping mature forages to set back vegetative growth for improved forage quality E528O

Timely clipping of mature forages through mowing, swathing or some other mechanical cutting will occur to increase forage palatability by setting plants back to a vegetative state for improved grazing management and forage quality.

Harvest of crops (hay or small grains) using measures that allow desired species to flush or escape E511A

Harvest of crops (hay or small grains) using conservation measures that allow desired species to flush or escape (See State Wildlife Action Plan for species list). Conservation measures include timing of harvest, idling land during the nesting or fawning period, and applying harvest techniques that reduce mortality to wildlife.

Diversifying forage base with interseeding forbs and legumes to increase pasture quality E512L

Establishing adapted and/or compatible species, varieties, or cultivars of perennial herbaceous species that increases the diversity to enhance livestock, forage supply and quality, not available in other pastures.

FAQ

frequently asked questions

How can I find out if I am eligible? The best way to determine eligibility is to contact your local field office. You must meet Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) requirements and have a Farm Tract Number with FSA. Land already enrolled in some USDA Farm Bill programs, such as CRP and some easement programs, may not be eligible.

Is there a minimum number of acres needed to be enrolled? No, but entire operation must be enrolled.

Is there a minimum contract payment? Yes, \$4,000 annually.

What are “bundles?” Bundles are suites of conservation enhancements designed to address multiple resource concerns. Bundle options are offered at a higher payment rate.

What are “enhancements?” Enhancements are management activities that go above and beyond the minimum practice requirements helping the producer achieve a higher level of conservation.

What are “resource concerns?” NRCS conservation specialists conduct resource inventories on agricultural land to evaluate natural resources including soil, water, air, plant, and animal resource bases to determine their condition. If there is a cause or threat to that resource, that can result in what we refer to as a resource concern. Examples of resource concerns are erosion, degraded water quality, and plant health.

Do I have options to pick the enhancements that are best suited for my operation? Yes. The variety of CSP practices that are offered give you a lot of freedom to select enhancements that help you meet your management goals.

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