



FY2026 Farmer First Regenerative Pilot Program Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. What is Regenerative Agriculture?

Regenerative Agriculture is a conservation management approach that emphasizes natural resources through improved soil health, water management, and natural vitality for the productivity and prosperity of American agriculture and communities.

Q2. What are the benefits of regenerative agriculture to producers and the land?

The NRCS Regenerative Pilot Program is a farmer first, outcomes-based approach to conservation designed to return the agency to its core mission, helping people help the land, by addressing whole-farm resource concerns through support for voluntary regenerative agriculture Conservation Plans. For too long, divided and highly specific funding pools have unintentionally encouraged isolated, practice-by-practice conservation, rather than holistic management. Emphasizing regenerative agriculture builds upon NRCS's 90 years of existing conservation work by restoring land health, improving long-term productivity, and ensuring American grown production for the future.

Q3. What kind of assistance does the Farmer First Regenerative Pilot Program provide?

The Regenerative Pilot Program will offer financial and technical assistance through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP).

Q4. Where will the Regenerative Pilot Program be offered?

All 50 states and territories will offer the Regenerative Pilot Program.

Q5. What percentage of funding should states dedicate to the Regenerative Pilot Program?

States will set aside 25% of their EQIP and CSP financial assistance funding. Both technical and financial resources will be available to producers at all stages of implementing regenerative agriculture, from those just starting out to those with more experience.

Q6. What are the requirements for the Regenerative Pilot Program?

The Regenerative Pilot Program has three requirements:

- **Whole Farm Assessment:** A complete assessment of all resource concerns is required, with the goal of establishing a whole farm plan before the end of the contract period. At a minimum, whole farm plans must meet NRCS planning criteria in the soil and water resource categories. These plans may be developed by NRCS staff, partners, or technical service providers.
 - Documenting planning criteria has been met is accomplished through CART by meeting or exceeding a Resource Concern's threshold, as calculated on the Results page.
 - Whole farm will be defined based on Program policy requirements: CSP policy requires all land that the operator has control of for 5 years to be a part of the application and thus the whole farm plan. EQIP policy supports a subset of land under control of the operator/customer to be encompassed by the whole farm plan.
- **Primary Practices:** A list of primary regenerative management practices is included in 440 NI-307. At least one primary regenerative management practice must be implemented by the end of the contract. Additional NRCS practices can support the objectives of regenerative agriculture in the right context. The practices identified in the conservation plan will be eligible for financial assistance; however, producers may select which practices they want to include in the financial assistance application based on their goals and objectives.

Primary Regenerative Management Practices	
328	Conservation Crop Rotation
330	Contour Farming
331	Contour Orchard and Other Perennial Crop
340	Cover Crop
554	Drainage Water Management
511	Forage Harvest Management
666	Forest Stand Improvement
449	Irrigation Water Management
484	Mulching
590	Nutrient Management
595	Pest Management Conservation System
528	Prescribed Grazing
329	Residue and Tillage Management, No Till
345	Residue and Tillage Management, Reduced
585	Stripcropping



EXAMPLE: *A farm may implement Conservation Crop Rotation, Cover Crop, and Nutrient Management as their primary management practices, but also identified the need for soil amendments using practice 333 - Amending Soil Properties with Gypsum Products, or 336 - Soil Carbon Amendment, as necessary to implement their conservation plan. These practices would be eligible for inclusion under the Regenerative Pilot Program.*

- **Soil Health Testing:** Participants must agree to perform soil health testing in the first and last year of the contract (at a minimum) to establish a starting baseline and to record the resulting changes. Financial assistance for soil testing will be available to both producers who have not previously completed soil testing and producers who are already testing their soil.

Q7. What is the duration of a Regenerative Pilot Program contract?

The contract length will be a minimum of 5 years.

Q8. If soil testing was already being conducted on the land in the operation, is the producer still eligible for the Regenerative Pilot Program?

Yes, customers who are already doing soil health testing at the time of application are eligible. Under a Regenerative Pilot Program contract, they will need to agree to continue testing at least in the first and last year of their contract. NRCS can cover the costs of the testing.

Q9. If a producer has already implemented one or more of the identified conservation practices, can they request an outcomes report?

Yes, a producer already implementing any of the identified conservation practices under the Regenerative Pilot Program may request an outcomes report to assess progress made addressing resource concerns on their farm.

Q10. How do I sign up for the Regenerative Pilot Program?

Farmers and ranchers interested in regenerative agriculture are encouraged to apply through their local NRCS Service Center by their state's ranking dates for consideration in FY2026 funding. Applications for both EQIP and CSP can now be submitted under the new regenerative application process.