

Application Ranking Summary FY19 EQIP High Tunnel System

National Priorities Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
If the application is for development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP), the agency will assign significant ranking priority and conservation benefit by answering “Yes” to the following question. Answering “Yes” to question 1a will result in the application being awarded the maximum amount of points that can be earned for the national priority category.	
1. a. Is the program application to support the development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP)? If answer is “Yes”, do not answer any other national level questions. If answer is “No”, proceed with evaluation to address the remaining questions in this section.	250 Point(s)
Water Quality Degradation – Will the proposed project improve water quality by: (select all that apply)	
2. a. Implementing the practices in a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP)?	15 Point(s)
2. b. Implementing the practices in a Nutrient Management Plan (NMP)?	10 Point(s)
2. c. Reducing impacts from sediment, nutrients, salinity, or pesticides on land adjoining a designated “impaired water body” (TMDL, 303d listed waterbody, or other State designation)?	10 Point(s)
2. d. Reducing the impacts from sediment, nutrients, salinity, or pesticides in a “non-impaired water body”?	10 Point(s)
2. e. Implementing practices that improve water quality through animal mortality and carcass management?	10 Point(s)
Water Conservation – Will the proposed project conserve water by: (select all that apply)	
3. a. Implementing irrigation practices that reduce aquifer overdraft.	15 Point(s)
3. b. Implementing irrigation practices that reduce on-farm water use?	10 Point(s)
3. c. Implementing practices in an area where the applicant participates in a geographically established or watershed-wide project?	10 Point(s)
3. d. Implementing practices that reduce on-farm water use as a result of changing to crops with lower water consumptive use, the rotation of crops, or the modification of cultural operations?	10 Point(s)
Air Quality - Will the proposed project improve air quality by: (select all that apply)	
4. a. Meeting on-farm regulatory requirements relating to air quality or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?	10 Point(s)
4. b. Implementing practices that reduce on-farm emissions of particulate matter (PM2.5, PM10)?	10 Point(s)
4. c. Implementing practices that reduce on-farm generated greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide (CO2), methane (CH4), and nitrous oxide (N2O)?	10 Point(s)
4. d. Implementing practices that increase on-farm carbon sequestration?	10 Point(s)
Soil Health :- Will the proposed project improve soil health by: (select all that apply)	
5. a. Reduce erosion to tolerable limits (Soil “T”)?	10 Point(s)
5. b. Increasing organic matter and carbon content, and improving soil tilth and structure?	10 Point(s)
Wildlife Habitat – Will the proposed project improve wildlife habitat by: (select all that apply)	
6. a. Implementing practices benefitting threatened and endangered, at-risk, candidate, or species of concern.	10 Point(s)
6. b. Implementing practices that retain wildlife and plant habitat on land exiting the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) or other set-aside program?	10 Point(s)
6. c. Implementing practices benefitting honey bee populations or other pollinators?	10 Point(s)
6. d. Implementing land-based practices that improve habitat for aquatic wildlife?	10 Point(s)
Plant and Animal Communities: Will the proposed project improve plant and animal communities by: (select all that apply)	

7. a. Implementing practices that result in the management control of noxious or invasive plant species on non-cropland?	10 Point(s)
7. b. Implementing practice in an Integrated Pest Management Plan (IPM)?	10 Point(s)
Energy Conservation– Will the proposed project reduce energy use by: (select all that apply)	
8. a. Reducing on-farm energy consumption?	10 Point(s)
8. b. Implementing practice(s) identified in an approved AgEMP or energy audit, which meet ASABE S612 criteria?	10 Point(s)
Business Lines – Will the practices to be scheduled in the “EQIP Plan of Operations” result in:	
9. a. Enhancement of existing conservation practice(s) or conservation systems already in place at the time the application is received?	10 Point(s)

State Issues Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
If the application is for development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP), the agency will assign significant ranking priority and conservation benefit by answering “Yes” to the following question. Answering “Yes” to question 1a will result in the application being awarded the maximum amount of points that can be earned for the state priority category	
1. a. Is the program application to support the development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP)? If answer is “Yes”, do not answer any other state level questions. If answer is “No”, proceed with evaluation to address the remaining questions in this section.	166 Point(s)
A screen tool will be used on all FY19 EQIP applications that were received and completely eligible prior to the application cutoff. If this application did not receive a high priority, please stop and do not continue ranking. (Ranking medium priority applications need approval from the State Con). You may only tag practices in the ranking tool that are included in the uploaded AD-1155. All applications need to have an application cost prior to ranking. (not just an estimate) If the plan is competing in multiple pools, upload the toolkit plan to the application most likely to be funded prior to ranking. Plan maps will clearly identify all contracted CINs and use official NRCS NPPH symbols. Only award points for conservation practices or activities that will be financially assisted in this EQIP contract. Changing or adjusting practices or extents after the application has been submitted for evaluation to achieve a better ranking score is not allowed in EQIP.	
1. 1. Will contracted practices assist the applicant in complying with at least one of the following: AFO/CFO, Tribal or Forest Practices Act laws and regulations, Water quality compliance on DOE designated water bodies, The Food Quality Protection Act? Identify: _____, 5 points	5 Point(s)
2. 2. Will the contract assist the applicant in implementing an existing comprehensive RMS plan (signed after 9-21-2008) that has been developed for the participant's entire Ag Operation(s)? (Forest Stewardship plan must meet the requirements for RMS to receive points) 15 points	15 Point(s)
3. 3. If selected for contracting, this application will allow the participant to become a first time adopter using all of the planned practices included on the AD-1155. Consider adopted practices on all associated agricultural operation(s) that they are involved in. 30 points	30 Point(s)
4. 4. Answer YES if the State Conservationist has provided approval to rank applications for this pool that are screened as Medium and this application has been screened as such (medium). (No Lows) -200 Points	-200 Point(s)
5. 5. Degree of conservation benefit: There are CINs included in the application that only address a resource concern that already meets planning criteria. -100 Points	-100 Point(s)
Tribal resource concern treatment:	
6. 6. Regardless of location, do all of the practices treat a Tribal resource concern according to the TRA? 5 Points https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/ma_in/wa/technical/	5 Point(s)
Likelihood that applicant will complete and maintain contracted practices:	

7. 7. The applicant did NOT properly operate and maintain previously cost-shared practices, or has prior EQIP contract(s) that have not stayed on schedule with the original AD-1155. Use applicant interviews, staff knowledge and ProTracts searches to make determination. This includes all participants applying as individuals and embedded members of entities, but excludes delays due to NRCS or are outside of the control of the participant. -50 Points	-50 Point(s)
8. 8. Applicant has been issued (or by policy should have been issued) an NRCS-CPA-153 on a current or prior NRCS contract(s) (FY14-18). This includes all participants applying as individuals and embedded members of entities, but excludes delays due to NRCS or are outside of the control of the participant. Excludes approved waivers. -150 Points	-150 Point(s)
9. 9. Applicant has a current or past contract that was (or by policy should have been) modified due to a delay in implementation of their practice schedule. This includes all participants applying as individuals and embedded members of entities, but excludes delays due to NRCS or are outside of the control of the participant. -15 Points	-15 Point(s)
10. 10. Cancelled contract: Applicant voluntarily requested cancellation of an obligated contract within the last three years.(FY16, FY17 or FY18) and the status of the cancellation hardship is not documented as being resolved. Example of are solved hardship would be: The participant has fully recovered from the health issue which necessitated the cancellation. Re-applying in hopes to receive a higher cost-share rate, or hold-down, should not be considered resolving the cancellation hardship. -35 Points	-35 Point(s)
11. 11. Applicant was pre-approved for a contract during FY18 and chose to cancel prior to obligation. -50 Points	-50 Point(s)
Established eligible practice list and hold-downs: DCs, will monitor contracts to consistently adhere to hold-downs. Hold-downs are based on CINs. Splitting a practice into multiple CINs or contracts to avoid the hold-down will not be permitted.	
12. 12. Application has a livestock type tagged on the application home screen. Or, includes at least one of the following wildlife practices. • CP 327 – Conservation Cover • CP 390 – Riparian Herbaceous Cover • CP 391 – Riparian Forest Buffer • CP 395 – Stream Habitat Improvement and Management • CP 396 – Aquatic Organism Passage • CP 422 –Hedgerow Planting • CP 472 – Access Control • CP 580 – Streambank and Shoreline Protection • CP 643 –Restoration and Management of Rare or Declining Habitats • CP 644 – Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management • CP645 – Upland Wildlife Habitat Management • CP 646 – Shallow Water Development and Management • CP 647 –Early Successional Habitat Development/Management • CP 657 – Wetland Restoration • CP 658 – Wetland Creation• CP 659 – Wetland Enhancement 30 Points	30 Point(s)
13. 13. Applicant has never had an NRCS contract terminated, or has never had an NRCS FA contract. This includes all participants applying as individuals and embedded members of entities. 300 points	300 Point(s)
14. 14. AD-1155 contains only practices that are identified on the current SHPO/THPO agreement as "Undertakings with little to no Potential to Affect Historic Properties". Or, CR has already been reviewed and approved by NRCS. No Potential to Affect Includes: 201, 315, 328, 329, 330, 340, 345, 353, 355, 367, 371, 372, 379, 399, 449, 450, 484, 511,528, 554, 557, 587, 588, 590, 591, 592, 595, 629, 775, 521A, 521B, 521C, 521D, 589C. There are also 30 other practices that are included if certain criteria is met. Please consult the agreement at: https://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/ 50 Points	50 Point(s)
15. 15. AD-1155 contains only practices that are non-engineering. Or, designs have already been reviewed and approved by NRCS. Engineering practices include: 309 - 313 - 316 - 317 - 319 - 320 - 326 - 350 - 351 - 353 - 356 - 360 - 362 - 367 -372 - 373 - 374 - 375 - 376 - 378 - 388 - 395 - 396 - 410 - 412 - 428 - 430 - 441 - 442 - 443 - 449 - 450 - 460 - 464 -500 - 516 - 520 - 521A - 521B - 521C - 521D - 533 - 554 - 558 - 560 - 561 - 570 - 574 - 575 - 578 - 580 - 582 - 584 -585 - 587 - 590 - 592 - 600 - 605 - 606 - 607 - 608 - 614 - 620 - 629 - 632 - 633 - 634 - 635 - 636 - 638 - 642 - 654 -655 - 657 - 659 - 670 - 672 - 735 - 775. 20 Points	20 Point(s)
16. 16. AD-1155 contains all practices with an ESA determination of “no effect” in the CPA-52. Or, ESA consultation has already occurred and NRCS has received concurrence on the proposed practices from FWS or NMFS. 100 points	100 Point(s)

17. 17. Application is associated with an ALE easement that requires a practice applied as per this plan to treat an endangered species and received points on their easement application ranking. 30 points	30 Point(s)
Eligible practice list and hold-downs continued	
18. Hold-downs: HTS \$15,000	0 Point(s)

Local Issues Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
If the application is for development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP), the agency will assign significant ranking priority and conservation benefit by answering “Yes” to the following question. Answering “Yes” to question 1a will result in the application being awarded the maximum amount of points that can be earned for the local priority category.	
1. 1a. Is the program application to support the development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP)? If answer is “Yes”, do not answer any other local level questions. If answer is “No”, proceed with evaluation to address the remaining questions in this section.	0 Point(s)
The hold-down for High Tunnel System (325) is \$15,000. The HT is the only eligible practice in this pool. There is no longer a size limit restriction per Ag. operation.	
1. Applicant currently produces crops for sale and consumption that are within commuting distances of farmers markets, fruit/produce distribution centers, or other community facilities. (or is a subsistence producer)	75 Point(s)
2. The proposed HTS will extend the growing season for high value crops in an environmentally safe manner and will substantially improve the participant's agricultural operation sustainability.	100 Point(s)
3. The NRCS planner and the participant understand the following: Note: The high tunnel practice is gaining recognition in many populated or urbanized areas. NRCS must consider and support all producers who submit an application regardless of where their operation is located. It is important to note that general program eligibility is not limited based on zoning. There is a common misconception that areas zoned as “urban” or “residential” (or other similar zoning types) are not eligible based on the zoning classification. However, while the applicant and land may meet program eligibility requirements, zoning may restrict a participant from installing certain practices. Participants who carry out conservation practices are responsible for obtaining the authorities, rights, easements, permits, or other approvals necessary for the implementation, operation, and maintenance of the conservation practices in keeping with the applicable laws and regulations.	0 Point(s)
Eligible practices and Hold-downs: As per the practice standard (325) the purpose of a HT is to improve plant health and vigor. Therefore, only answer National ranking questions that relate to: Degraded Plant Condition - Undesirable Plant Productivity and Health	
4. Through the National High Tunnel System Initiative (NSHTI), NRCS will assist producers to extend the growing season for high value crops in an environmentally safe manner. The initiative has the potential to assist producers in addressing a resource concern by improving plant quality. Note: The high tunnel practice is gaining recognition in many populated or urbanized areas. NRCS must consider and support all producers who submit an application regardless of where their operation is located. It is important to note that general program eligibility is not limited based on zoning. There is a common misconception that areas zoned as “urban” or “residential” (or other similar zoning types) are not eligible based on the zoning classification. However, while the applicant and land may meet program eligibility requirements, zoning may restrict a participant from installing certain practices.	0 Point(s)

5. Participants who carry out conservation practices are responsible for obtaining the authorities, rights, easements, permits, or other approvals necessary for the implementation, operation, and maintenance of the conservation practices in keeping with the applicable laws and regulations. Only those applications that are screened as HIGH using the HT screening tool should be ranked. The holddown for High Tunnel System (325) is \$15,000. As per the practice standard (325) the purpose of a HT is to improve plant health and vigor. Therefore, only answer National ranking questions that relate to: Degraded Plant Condition - Undesirable Plant Productivity and Health	0 Point(s)
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Land Use:

This ranking report is for your information. It does not in any way guarantee funding. When funding becomes available, you will be notified if your application is selected for funding. Some changes to the application may be required before a final contract is awarded.