Concerned with:
Looking for technical advice starting a farm? Interested in improving the farming infrastructure you already have? Wanting to take your conservation practices to the next level?
The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service can help!

**VETERANS PREFERENCE**
The 2018 Farm Bill has retained preference for veterans of the U.S. Armed Services. This preference applies to those who have served in the United States Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, its reserve components, and the National Guard.

**Eligibility**
An eligible veteran farmer or rancher must have been discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable and must also meet the USDA definition of Beginning Farmer or Rancher.

The veteran must not have operated a farm or ranch for more than 10 consecutive years.

**Application Preference**
An application preference will be given to eligible veterans applying for NRCS financial assistance such as Environmental Quality Incentives Program and the Conservation Stewardship Program.

**GETTING STARTED...**

**Go to the Office**
We have 54 across the state. NRCS will work with you on eligibility and to develop a conservation plan tailored to your agricultural operation. This voluntary plan will be based on your priorities and solid science and can serve as a basis for financial assistance.

**Financial Assistance**
The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a voluntary program for farmers, ranchers and private forest landowners. EQIP shares with participants the cost of conservation practices (see sidebar on back). The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) offers additional opportunities for those already meeting a baseline level of stewardship.

**Apply**
Apply anytime during the year. Eligible projects will be evaluated, prioritized and selected for funding as budget allocations permit.

**Concerned with:**
Looking for technical advice starting a farm? Interested in improving the farming infrastructure you already have? Wanting to take your conservation practices to the next level?
The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service can help!
Changes to NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program in 2018 Farm Bill

- Historically Underserved (HU) applicants, include those who qualify as a Beginning Farmer or Rancher, a Socially Disadvantaged Farmer-Rancher, Veteran Farmer or Limited Resource Farmer-Rancher.

- HU contract participants may receive up to 50% of the amount needed to implement conservation practices for the purpose of purchasing “immediately needed” materials and services.

Typical NRCS Conservation Practices

HIGH TUNNEL/HOOP HOUSE
A high tunnel is an enclosed polyethylene, polycarbonate, plastic or fabric covered structure at least 6 feet in height, used to cover and protect crops from sun, wind, excessive rain or cold to extend the growing season in an environmentally safe manner.

HEDGEROW PLANTING
Establishing a line of dense vegetation to provide wildlife habitat, increase soil carbon storage, and provide a dust barrier. Adds habitat for beneficial insects and pollinators.

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT
Managing the amount, source, placement, form, and timing of application of plant nutrients and soil amendments.

MULCHING
Using ground cover to manage soil moisture, soil temperature, erosion, and weeds. Provides vegetative cover, and improves soil condition.

IRRIGATION WATER MANAGEMENT
Determining and controlling the rate, amount, and timing of irrigation water in a planned and efficient manner.

BRUSH MANAGEMENT
Removal of woody debris to restore natural plant community balance, restore vegetative cover, and enhance wildlife habitat.

FENCING
Construction of a barrier to control the movement of animals or vehicles. May be permanent or temporary based on need.

LIVESTOCK WELL AND WATER FACILITY
Installation of a permanent or portable device to provide an adequate amount and quality of drinking water for livestock and or wildlife.

About NRCS, FSA and RMA

In more than 80 years of helping farmers, ranchers and private forestland owners, NRCS has assembled technical standards (like those in the sidebar at right) to address natural resource concerns. The USDA’s Farm Services Agency (FSA) and Risk Management Agency (RMA) provide other critical resources such as farm loans, crop insurance and disaster assistance.

For more information on NRCS Farm Bill conservation programs visit www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/ca/programs/

Updated December 2019