



Rotational grazing

## Massachusetts field offices

### **Greenfield Field Office**

*Serving Franklin County*

55 Federal Street, Greenfield, MA 01301

413-772-0384 ext. 3

### **Hadley Field Office**

*Serving Hampden and Hampshire counties*

195 Russell Street, Hadley, MA 01035

413-585-1000 ext. 3

### **Holden Field Office**

*Serving Worcester County*

52 Boyden Road, Holden, MA 01520

508-829-4477 ext. 3

### **Pittsfield Field Office**

*Serving Berkshire County*

78 Center St., Suite 206, Pittsfield, MA 01201

413-443-1776 ext. 3

### **Westford Field Office**

*Serving Essex, Middlesex and Suffolk counties*

319 Littleton Road, Westford, MA 01886

978-692-1904 ext. 3

### **Wareham Field Office**

*Serving Bristol, Norfolk and Plymouth counties*

8 Thatcher Lane, Wareham, MA 02571

508-295-5151 ext. 3

### **West Yarmouth Field Office**

*Serving Barnstable, Dukes and Nantucket counties*

303 Main St, Route 28, West Yarmouth, MA 02673-4661

508-771-6476 or 6518



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Massachusetts • March 2020



Pond | Prescribed burn | High tunnel



United States Department of Agriculture

# Environmental Quality Incentives Program

Financial assistance for  
conservation practices



Bedded pack | Cover crop

Massachusetts

Natural  
Resources  
Conservation  
Service

[www.ma.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.ma.nrcs.usda.gov)



# The EQIP Program

Financial assistance for conservation



Tree/shrub establishment

We offer you technical help for planning and designing conservation practices that protect water and air, improve soil health, enable you to better care for farm animals, manage animal waste, and sustain agricultural land.

EQIP provides financial assistance to make these practices more affordable.

## Who can participate?

All private landowners and operators who are engaged in crop and livestock production on agricultural land or forest management on forest land may participate in the EQIP program. Participation is voluntary.

## Get started

Call your local NRCS field office to discuss your natural resource needs and work with our staff to develop a conservation plan.

A conservation planner will visit your farm and help you inventory and assess your natural resources, identify resource concerns, and evaluate alternative solutions.



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## vation practices

The planner will work with you to develop a conservation plan, which will include a list of conservation practices that will meet your goals and objectives and an implementation schedule. Your conservation plan is a record of **your** decisions.

### How do you apply?

Once you are ready, willing and able to move forward, you will work with NRCS and the Farm Service Agency (FSA) to establish your program eligibility and file an application.

Applications are selected for funding every year, on a monthly basis (March through August) or until funds have been exhausted. Applications not selected one month automatically carry over to the next month in a rolling sign-up and funding cycle.

### How are applications ranked?

Applications will be ranked according to local resource concerns and the amount of conservation benefits the work will provide. Applications demonstrating the highest environmental benefit will be awarded contracts.



Soil health assessments

## How does an EQIP contract work?

If you decide to sign an EQIP contract with NRCS, both you and the agency have some responsibilities.

- ◆ **NRCS** will provide technical guidance and specifications for the planned practices.
- ◆ **You** will work with your contractor to implement the practices according to schedule and to NRCS standards and specifications.

EQIP payment rates are published annually on our website and are used to calculate funding for the extent of work planned in your contract. All practices established with EQIP funding must be maintained for the life span of the practice.

## What are the payment benefits and limitations?

You'll receive payment once conservation practices are completed according to NRCS requirements and certified by NRCS staff.

If you're an historically under-served, beginning, socially disadvantaged or limited resource farmer, you may qualify for a higher practice payment rate.

All participants are limited to a total of \$450,000 over a rolling four-year period from October 2018 through September 2023, regardless of the number of farms or contracts.



Manure management