

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Maine



967 Illinois Avenue, Suite #3
Bangor, ME 04401
www.me.nrcs.usda.gov
www.twitter.com/NRCSMaine

Contact:
Thomas Kielbasa: (207) 745-7493
thomas.kielbasa@usda.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AMA and EQIP application cut-off period deadlines set for Maine farmers

*Application cut-off for Fiscal Year 2021 funding consideration
is Oct. 2, 2020*

BANGOR, Maine (April 6, 2020) – Maine farmers seeking conservation planning and financial assistance should contact [their local USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service \(NRCS\) office](#) soon for help treating natural resource concerns.

Applications for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) program are accepted on a continuous basis, however, NRCS establishes application “cut-off” dates for evaluation and ranking of eligible applications. **For consideration in Fiscal Year 2021, the application cut-off date is Oct. 2, 2020.** Applicants will be asked to work with NRCS conservation planners to assess resource needs and agree on practices to treat these needs.

Using EQIP assistance, farmers can adopt structural and management practices that help treat a natural resource concern, such as soil erosion or water quality, on working agricultural lands. Many of the available practices also provide supplemental benefits such as improved soil health, wildlife habitat and energy conservation.

Along with traditional conservation practices such as grassed waterways and buffer strips, farmers can use EQIP to help implement practices that improve manure, nutrient and pasture management. Farmers may also adopt popular management practices like no-till and cover crops through EQIP.

EQIP can also be helpful for transitioning to organic production, developing a rotational grazing system, adding pollinator habitat to a farm, building a high tunnel system for fruit and vegetable production, or constructing a denitrifying bioreactor or saturated buffer to improve water quality.

NRCS sets aside 10 percent of EQIP funding for historically underserved customers, which include beginning farmers socially disadvantaged farmers, limited resource producers, Tribal farmers and veterans. These customers receive a higher EQIP payment rate on their conservation practices and are eligible to request advance payment to offset the cost of materials or services needed to begin implementing the contracted conservation practices.

The Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) helps agricultural producers manage financial risk through diversification, marketing or natural resource conservation practices. NRCS administers the conservation provisions while Agricultural Marketing Service and Risk Management Agency implement the production diversification and marketing provisions. Using AMA, producers may construct or improve water management structures or irrigation structures; plant trees for windbreaks or to improve water quality; and mitigate risk through production diversification or resource conservation practices, including soil erosion control, integrated pest management, or transition to organic farming.

For more details on EQIP and AMA, please contact your local service center. USDA Service Centers are open for business by phone appointment only and field work will continue with appropriate social distancing. While program delivery staff will continue to come into the office, they will be working with producers by phone, and using online tools whenever possible. All Service Center visitors wishing to conduct business with NRCS, Farm Service Agency, or any other Service Center agency are required [to call their Service Center](#) to schedule a phone appointment. More information can be found at farmers.gov/coronavirus.

###

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender