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USDA in Georgia Announces April 2 Application Cutoff for Conservation Stewardship Program

ATHENS, GA, March 1, 2021 – State Conservationist Terrance O. Rudolph of the US Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) announced today the statewide cutoff for fiscal year 2021 [Conservation Stewardship Program \(CSP\)](#) funding. All Georgia agricultural producers and landowners who wish to be considered for this year’s funding should apply by April 2, 2021.

Through CSP, USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) helps farmers, ranchers and forest landowners earn payments for expanding conservation activities while maintaining agricultural production on their land. CSP also encourages adoption of new technologies and management techniques.

“CSP is the nation’s largest conservation program in terms of participating land,” said Rudolph. “It’s one of our sharpest tools for private landowners working to achieve their conservation and management goals.”

Changes in the 2018 Farm Bill authorize NRCS to accept new CSP enrollments from now until 2023 and makes some improvements to the program. These updates include:

- NRCS now enrolls eligible, high-ranking applications based on dollars rather than acres.
- Higher payment rates are now available under the 2018 Farm Bill for certain conservation activities, including cover crops and resource conserving crop rotations.
- Provides specific support for organic and for transitioning to organic production activities and a special grassland conservation initiative for certain producers who have maintained cropland base acres.

While applications are accepted throughout the year, interested producers should submit applications to their local NRCS office by the deadline to ensure their applications are considered for 2021 funding.

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About the Program

CSP is offered in Georgia through continuous signups. The program provides many benefits including increased crop yields, decreased inputs, wildlife habitat improvements and increased resilience to weather extremes. CSP is for working lands including cropland, pastureland, rangeland, nonindustrial private forest land and agricultural land under the jurisdiction of a tribe.

For additional information about CSP and other conservation programs, contact your local service center or visit <https://farmers.gov/conserve>.

COVID-19 Guidance

USDA is open for business but operating with COVID-19 related limitations. Our employees are limited in the amount of direct contact we can have with customers both for your safety and ours. This does not mean field offices are closed, but most offices are servicing customers by appointment only. Please keep this in mind and plan ahead of the April 2, 2021 deadline by contacting the office by phone or by email, before making an office visit.

You can also [learn about recent updates](#) to <https://www.farmers.gov> that make working online with the USDA a little easier. There you'll also find the contact information for your [local USDA Service Center](#) for when need to speak to someone directly.

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