



United States Department of Agriculture



Southern Cover Crop Conference 2-25-2026

FARM PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION
FSA | NRCS | RMA | Business Center

Submitting EQIP & CSP Applications

Applications Accepted Year-Round

Producers can submit EQIP and CSP applications at any time
Ranking and funding cycles occur periodically based on state schedules

Ways to Submit an EQIP or CSP Application

- In-Person at a NRCS Field Office
- By Email, Mail, or Over the Phone
- Through [Farmers.gov](https://www.farmers.gov)
- With partner/consultant assistance

Requirements for Private Consultants

- Private consultants **should not submit** initial NRCS program applications, the customer should submit their application unless the customer submits form NRCS-CPA-1270
- If a customer wants NRCS to work with a consultant, they must submit form **NRCS-CPA-1270, Consent to Release or Receive Information**

EQIP/CSP Incentive Programs, Not Cost-Share

- EQIP/CSP provide **flat-rate incentive payments** to encourage adoption of conservation practices
- These programs **do not reimburse actual costs** or operate as cost-share programs
- Incentive payments are based on nationally established and account for **estimated costs and income foregone**
- Program goal is to **reward conservation performance and stewardship**, not share expenses

CSP Changes

- Starting in FY2026, existing activity payments (EAP) will be **\$4,000 per contract, per year.**
- **Phase-out of enhancement codes** while maintaining the concept of enhancing conservation practices.



EQIP – Address Resource Concerns	CSP – Advance Stewardship
Focused on fixing problems or implementing needed improvements	Focused on whole-operation conservation and long-term stewardship
Helps producers address specific natural resource concerns	Helps producers enhance existing conservation to a higher level
Supports structural, vegetative, and management practices	Builds on current practices to enhance stewardship
Only the land targeted for improvements is enrolled	Requires enrollment of all eligible land in the operation
Short-term , practice-based contracts	Whole-farm , performance-based contracts
Best for producers needing targeted, practice-based solutions	Best for producers to build on what’s working and take their stewardship to the next level

Regenerative Pilot Program

Qualifying Criteria for Funding Consideration

1. Whole-Farm Planning Requirements

The whole farm plan must address all identified soil and water resource concerns by the end of the contract period for:

CSP: at least one land use

EQIP: at least one land unit

2. Regenerative Practice Requirement

The plan must include **at least one primary regenerative practice** scheduled for implementation. Additional supporting practices may be included, but at least one primary regenerative practice is mandatory.

3. Soil Health Testing

CEMA 216 soil health testing must be scheduled **both at the beginning and at the end** of the contract.

4. Contract Duration

The contract must have a **minimum length of 5 years**.

Regenerative Pilot Program

Conservation Practices

Code	Asset Name	Crop	Forest	Pasture	Range
328	Conservation Crop Rotation	Y	N	N	N
330	Contour Farming	Y	N	N	N
331	Contour Orchard and Other Perennial Crop	Y	N	N	N
340	Cover Crop	Y	Y	Y	N
554	Drainage Water Management	Y	Y	Y	Y
511	Forage Harvest Management	Y	Y	Y	Y
666	Forest Stand Improvement	N	Y	Y	N
449	Irrigation Water Management	Y	Y	Y	N
484	Mulching	Y	Y	Y	Y
590	Nutrient Management	Y	Y	Y	N
595	Pest Management Conservation System	Y	Y	Y	Y
528	Prescribed Grazing	Y	Y	Y	Y
329	Residue and Tillage Management, No Till	Y	N	N	N
345	Residue and Tillage Management, Reduced	Y	N	N	N
585	Stripcropping	Y	N	N	N

Regenerative Pilot Program

Conservation Evaluation and Monitoring Activities

Code	Asset Name	Crop	Forest	Pasture	Range
CEMA 216	Soil Health Testing	Y	Y	Y	Y
CEMA 217	Soil and Source Testing for Nutrient Management	Y	Y	Y	Y

Conservation Planning Activity

Code	Asset Name	Crop	Forest	Pasture	Range
CPA 199	Conservation Plan	Y	Y	Y	Y

Regenerative Pilot Program

Additional information about the regenerative pilot program can be found on the national webpage:

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives/regenerative-pilot-program>

