

2004 Farm Bill Conservation Programs and TSP Update

2004 Wisconsin Fertilizer, Aglime
and Pest Management
Conference

Technical Service Providers

- FY-03 an estimated \$125,000 of TSP services was contracted in EQIP contracts (primarily nutrient management planning).
 - FY-03 EQIP contracts will be revised to include TSP funds as soon as FY-04 federal budget is finalized and funds are allocated to the NRCS state offices.
 - TSP rates will be based on revised FY-04 costs.
 - Prior to payment of cost-sharing to the program participant the cost-share contract must include TSP as an item number and the TSP must be certified in TechReg (www.techreg.gov).

Technical Service Provider

- To register as a TSP
 - Designate an Official Representative for Your Business (this should be the person who will maintain the TechReg account).
 - Obtain a Level 2 e-government Account (<http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov>).
 - Register as a TSP through TechReg (<http://www.techreg.usda.gov>)
- For Assistance Contact Ken Rismeyer at 608-662-4422 ext. 212 or ken.rismeyer@wi.usda.gov

Technical Service Providers

- DRAFT FY-04 TSP Not to Exceed rates will be release to the NRCS state offices in February.
- TSP NTE rates are to reflect the cost of NRCS providing technical assistance.
 - Should not include “profit” factor. During development of rule private sector indicated that private sector efficiencies would provide incentive.
 - Should include sufficient incentive to cover “risk”.

Technical Service Providers

- FY-04 direct contracting with TSP's by program participants will continue to be encouraged.
 - Minimizes NRCS administrative workload.
 - Maintains continuity between farmer and TSP.
- WI NRCS will advertise for TSP's to assist with design and installation of engineering practices. (www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov)

Farm Bill Update

- Environmental Quality Incentives Program
 - Continuous sign up presently underway.
 - 2004 practices and cost-share rates presently being updated by local work groups. Contact your NRCS District Conservationist for status.
 - DRAFT 2004 calls for an increase in EQIP \$ (not yet finalized by congress).
 - Estimated \$14 Million EQIP budget for Wisconsin.

Farm Bill Update (EQIP Cont.)

- Anticipate call for EQIP application rankings in April.
- Anticipate EQIP contract development in late April/May.
- Construction/implementation of cost-share practices cannot occur prior to approval of EQIP cost-sharing contract.

Farm Bill Update

- Conservation Security Program
 - Provides payments and technical assistance to agricultural producers to maintain and enhance the condition of the natural resources on the land that they own or operate.
 - Limited sign-ups with rigorous eligibility criteria to ensure that most pressing resource concerns are addressed.
 - Limit each sign-up to selected priority watersheds.
 - Fund the contracts that demonstrate the highest commitment to conservation first.

Farm Bill Update (CSP Cont.)

- Payments per acre will be based on 2001 national rental rates.
- General rental rates will be scaled down and additional payments added for “additional environmental performance”.
- Participants will conduct a “self assessment” on-line to determine eligibility and to develop a CSP application.

Farm Bill Update

(CSP Cont.)

- CSP participants must operate the land and maintain the conservation systems for the life of the CSP contract (2007).
- Contracts are transferable with the land.
- CSP payments must be divided among tenants and sharecroppers.
- DRAFT rules open for comment until February 29, 2004. Text of rule available at (www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov).

Farm Bill Update

- Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
 - FSA anticipates a spring sign-up for the annual CRP program (federal budget may delay).
 - FSA will continue to have primary responsibility for accepting sign-ups and developing preliminary contract and practice cost estimates.
 - NRCS likely will assist accepted participants with development of final CRP plan.
 - New option for CP-29 no longer requires planting trees for Riparian Filter Strips in pastured areas.

Farm Bill Update

- Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)
 - Continuous sign-up in eligible parts of WI.
 - Cooperatively implemented by FSA, County Land Conservation Departments and NRCS.
 - Offers additional Practice Incentive Payments.
 - Offers the option of 15 year contracts or permanent easements for certain practices.
 - No longer require planting trees on CP-29 Riparian Filter Strips in pastured areas.

Farm Bill Update

- Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program
 - Provides cost-sharing to implement individual wildlife habitat improvement practices.
 - Continuous sign-up.
- Wetland Reserve Program
 - Provides cost-sharing to restore wetland complexes and surrounding habitat.
 - Continuous sign-up.
 - Offers 30 year or permanent easements.

Farm Bill Update

- Farmland and Ranchland Protection Program
 - Allows purchase of development rights in cooperation with local entities for farmland with a high potential for conversion.
- Grassland Reserve Program
 - Offers 10-30 year agreements or permanent easements to protect grasslands threatened by conversion to cropland or development.

Contact Information

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