

# Environmental Quality Incentives Program EQIP

The Environmental  
Quality Incentives  
Program can help  
you:

- Protect water quality
- Conserve water supplies & improve irrigation efficiency
- Promote healthy soil & reduce erosion
- Improve air quality
- Save energy
- Improve forest health
- Protect plant & animal communities



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

HELPING PEOPLE  
HELP THE LAND

NRCS NEW MEXICO



The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a voluntary program that helps producers install measures to protect the soil, water, air, and other natural resources on their working lands.

Through EQIP, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides funding and professional expertise for measures that protect natural resources while ensuring sustainable production on farms, ranches and working forest land.

#### **Technical & Financial Assistance**

Those who submit an application and are accepted into EQIP may receive payments to offset costs associated with materials and installation of conservation measures. Practices funded through EQIP include:

- Manure management practices,
- Pest management treatments,
- Efficient irrigation upgrades,
- Forest stewardship plans and management practices,
- Erosion control and buffers,
- Range and pasture planting,
- Fencing and stockwater, and
- A number of other measures.

Fiscal Year 2010 EQIP payment rates can be found on the New Mexico NRCS Web site at: [www.nm.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip](http://www.nm.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip) or at your local NRCS office.

Through EQIP, NRCS may also provide or cover the cost of professional technical services to design the selected measures. This includes:

- On-site assessments,
- Site-specific practice and management plans, and
- Engineering designs.

### **Historically Underserved Clients**

EQIP provides a higher payment rate to agricultural producers (individuals, joint operations or entities) who qualify as a Beginning Farmer-Rancher, a Socially Disadvantaged Farmer-Rancher, or Limited Resource Farmer-Rancher. For more information, contact your NRCS office or go to: [www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/SLB\\_Farmer](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/SLB_Farmer).

### **Land Eligibility**

Eligible land includes privately owned and Tribal cropland, rangeland, pasture, non-industrial forestland, and other working farm or ranch lands.

### **Applicant Eligibility**

The applicant may be an individual or an entity. In the case of contract farmers, either the landowner or lessee may enter into an EQIP contract, provided the applicant meets all eligibility criteria. To be eligible, applicants must own or manage the land and have a vested interest in the agricultural operation. An eligible applicants will be either:

- a. An agricultural producer engaged in livestock/agricultural production; or
- b. A private non-industrial forest landowner.

In addition, eligible applicants will:

- Have control of the land during the length of the contract;
- Meet highly erodible land & wetland conservation provisions of the 1985 Food Security Act;
- Meet Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) criteria;
- If signing up as a certified organic producer, provide a copy of their approved Organic System Plan (OSP) to NRCS; and
- Meet other program requirements.

### **When and How to Apply**

EQIP applications may be submitted at any time at the local USDA Service Center.

In addition to submitting application materials, you will also work with NRCS to identify and plan the conservation measures you want on your land. This information is recorded in a conservation plan that includes a detailed description of your selected practices. Those who have previously developed a conservation plan with NRCS may already have the conservation planning step completed.

### **Program Participation**

Each year, NRCS announces a cutoff date when applications are ranked and selected for funding.

After an application is selected for funding, the applicant enters into a program contract with USDA. The contract is based on practices outlined in the conservation plan and will specify a period of time, one to ten years, during which activities

must be completed. These activities may include practice installation as well as operational and maintenance activities. Program participants are expected to maintain any EQIP practice throughout its useful life, even after the contract is completed.

In most cases, EQIP payments are made after practices have been completed and certified by NRCS as meeting practice standards and specifications.

### **More Information**

Contact NRCS to learn more about how EQIP can help you protect and improve your working lands. More information can be found at your local USDA Service Center listed in the telephone book under Federal government agencies.

Or, visit the NRCS Web site at:

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



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