

Kansas NRCS Announces National EQIP Initiatives for 2013

Eric B. Banks, State Conservationist with U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) announces three National Initiatives being offered in Kansas through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP): On-Farm Energy, Organic, and Seasonal High Tunnels.

While NRCS accepts applications for EQIP on a continuous basis throughout the year, the sign-up period for the On-Farm Energy, Organic, and Seasonal High Tunnel Initiatives will end on **January 18, 2013**. More sign-ups may be offered as funding becomes available.

"We encourage our producers to take advantage of the conservation opportunities being made available to them through these EQIP Initiatives," Banks said.

Initiatives Overview

On-Farm Energy Initiative: Producers work with an NRCS-approved Technical Service Provider (TSP) to develop Agricultural Energy Management Plans or farm energy audits that assess energy consumption on an operation. NRCS may also provide assistance to implement various recommended measures identified in the energy audit through the use of conservation practice standards offered through this initiative.

Organic Initiative: NRCS will assist producers with installation of conservation practices on agricultural operations related to organic production. Producers currently certified as organic, transitioning to organic, or National Organic Program exempt will have access to a broad set of conservation practices to assist in treating their resource concerns while fulfilling many of the requirements in an Organic System Plan.

Seasonal High Tunnel Initiative: NRCS helps producers implement high tunnels that extend growing seasons for high value crops in an environmentally safe manner. High tunnel benefits include better plant and soil quality and fewer nutrients and pesticides in the environment.

Eligibility

EQIP offers financial and technical assistance to eligible participants to install or implement structural and management practices on eligible agricultural land. Conservation practices must be implemented to NRCS standards and specifications. In Kansas, socially disadvantaged, limited resource, and beginning farmers and ranchers will receive a higher payment rate for eligible conservation practices applied.

Information Available

For more information about NRCS and its programs, stop by your local USDA Service Center or go to the Web site www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov. Follow us on Twitter @NRCS_Kansas. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer

