

## Applications for Conservation Stewardship Program

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will be conducting a sign up for the Conservation Security Program (CSP) for new enrollments for federal fiscal year (FY) 2014. Starting today through January 17, 2014, producers interested in participating in the program can submit applications to NRCS.

“Through the Conservation Stewardship Program, farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners are going the extra mile to conserve our nation’s resources,” NRCS Chief Jason Weller said. “Through their conservation actions, they are ensuring that their operations are more productive and sustainable over the long run.”

The CSP is an important Farm Bill conservation program that helps established conservation stewards with taking their level of natural resource management to the next level to improve both their agricultural production and provide valuable conservation benefits such as cleaner and more abundant water, as well as healthier soils and better wildlife habitat.

The program emphasizes conservation performance —producers earn higher payments for higher performance. In CSP, many of the enhancements improve soil quality, which helps land become more resilient to extreme weather.

Some popular enhancements used by farmers and ranchers include:

- Using new nozzles that reduce the drift of pesticides, lowering input costs, and making sure pesticides are used where they are most needed.
- Modifying water facilities to prevent animals from being trapped.
- Rotating feeding areas and monitoring key grazing areas to improve grazing management.

Eligible landowners and operators in Kansas can enroll in CSP through January 17, 2014, to be eligible during FY 2014. While local NRCS offices accept the CSP applications year round, NRCS evaluates applications during announced ranking periods. To be eligible for this year’s enrollment, producers must have their applications submitted to the NRCS by the January 17, 2014, closing date.

A CSP self-screening checklist is available to help producers determine if the program is suitable for their operation. The checklist highlights basic information about the CSP eligibility requirements, stewardship threshold requirements, and payment types.

For the checklist and additional information, visit the CSP Web site  
<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/csp/>

or visit your local U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) NRCS office.

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