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Funds available to help with erosion problems in Nebrsaka

(KLZA)-- Farmers know when they lose soil, they lose profits. Preventing soil erosion is good for the environment and for producers' bottom line.

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has funding available to help Nebraska's farmers control erosion on their cropland. This funding is available through the Ephemeral Gully Control Initiative under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program. Eligible producers have until July 13, 2020, to apply.

Controlling erosion is especially important for recipients of USDA program benefits – like federal crop insurance subsidies and conservation program payments. USDA program participants are required to control erosion on all cropland determined to be highly erodible. The funding available through this special initiative can help farmers meet that requirement.

Nebraska State Conservationist Craig Derickson said, "Conservation practices such as cover crops and grassed waterways are good solutions for controlling ephemeral gullies, which is required by conservation compliance provisions."

According to NRCS, over the last couple decades, there has been a continual decrease in grassed waterways and terraces being used. On some fields, this has led to increased erosion and ephemeral gullies.

Derickson said, "Ephemeral gullies are those rough spots where water concentrates and causes soil to wash away, creating small ditches. While the damage to cropland appears to be small, if not controlled, the negative impacts like loss of inputs, decreased soil health and yields can be significant. Plus, it can cause farmers to be out of compliance with USDA's Food Security Act requirements."

For more information, and to apply for funding through this special initiative, contact NRCS before July 13. Due to the on-going COVID-19 public health situation, producers are encouraged to call local offices to set up an appointment with NRCS staff over the phone.

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