



New Jersey Conservation Programs 2008 EQIP Guidance

Agricultural producers and eligible land owners or land managers may apply for conservation practices that:

- are included in an approved Conservation Plan; and
- will achieve a positive environmental benefit; and
- are listed in this document.

If an application is approved based on available funding, NRCS will develop a draft contract listing the payments to be made upon successful practice completion. Applicants will have ample opportunity to review the proposed payments prior to contract signature. No practices can be installed until the final contract is approved by NRCS, unless a waiver is granted by the State Conservationist.

Although based on the average cost to implement typical conservation practices in NJ, practice payments are made regardless of actual cost to the contract holder.

Each installed practice must meet the minimum design requirements in the applicable NRCS Conservation Practice Standard in order to receive the contract payment.

The payment will be based on the extent (amount) of the conservation practice actually performed, not the cost.

To apply, applicants must complete a program application and the "*Conservation Planning Worksheet*" available on our website. Applicants must also meet all applicable Highly Erodible Land and Adjusted Gross Income provisions, and establish or update all farm and persons records before NRCS will process their application. Details can be found in the "*Applying for Federal Farm Conservation Programs*" available on our website.

[Beginning Farmers](#) and [Limited Resource Producers](#) installing structural practices are eligible for a higher payment contribution by NRCS toward the completion of the practices. These applicants may be subject to a review of their qualifying documents prior to contract approval.

Current payment rates are found in the *Schedule of Program Payments* on the NJ Conservation Programs web page (www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/index.html).

More information about conservation programs can be found on the NJ Conservation Programs web page: (www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/index.html). Information about conservation practices can be found in the electronic Field Office Technical Guide (www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov/efotg) or on practice job sheets available through your local NRCS office/USDA Service Center.

Eligible applications will be grouped into "funding pools", with the highest ranked applications in each pool selected for contract development. There will be five funding pools for 2008: Cropland (no livestock); Beef & Dairy operations; Other Livestock operations; Aquaculture operations; and Beginning Farmers (BF) and Limited Resource Producers (LRP). A minimum of 10% of available funds will be provided to the BF&LRP pool.

Conservation practices eligible for payment assistance under the NJ program in 2008 are listed alphabetically in this document under the following resource areas:

- Cropland Practices
- Irrigation Systems
- Pasture or Grazing Land
- Animal Waste Management
- Aquaculture Practices
- Stormwater Management

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Program payments are made according to the practice schedule in the Conservation Contract and are based on the extent of the practice performed. For practices marked "MGT", three consecutive years of the practice will be scheduled in consultation with the contract holder, as long as the contract meets all other policy requirements.

Program payments for these management practices (marked "MGT") will be made for each year the practice meets NRCS standards. If the practice does not meet standards, no payment will be made; and the payment will not be re-scheduled unless the contract holder provides a written justification to the State Conservationist for approval. If two or more years of the practice are forfeited due to non-compliance, the contract will be in violation and liquidated damages may be sought.

Additionally, for Irrigation Water Management and Prescribed Grazing:

The first year of the MGT payment will be scheduled for the year after all on-the-ground components required to carry out the practice are scheduled to be installed. This includes all irrigation appurtenances and all fencing and watering systems for grazing operations.

In addition to meeting the quality standards in each Conservation Practice Technical Standard, the following guidelines are used to determine whether practices are eligible for program payments. Practices are listed by the resource area.

CROPLAND PRACTICES: All active cropland is eligible.

Air Resources Management (MGT)

Use alternative fuels - E85 or bio-diesel (B20 or higher) - for on-farm agricultural activities.

Agrichemical Handling Facility

Install a permanent structure with an impervious surface to provide an environmentally safe area for the mixing and handling of pesticides and fertilizers used on agricultural lands.

Conservation Cover

Establish new permanent vegetative cover on cropland to protect soil and water resources.

Conservation Crop Rotation (MGT)

Establish a *new* crop rotation system, including the introduction of higher residue crops in rotation with at least two other crops, in order to reduce or control sheet and rill erosion to the soil "T" level.

Contour Buffer Strips

Establish narrow strips of permanent, herbaceous vegetation across the slope and alternate with wider cropped strips to reduce sheet and rill erosion, reduce transport of sediment and other contaminants, or to enhance wildlife habitat. Payment is made on the buffer strip portion of the field only.

Cover Crop (MGT)

Annually establish grasses or legumes for seasonal cover to reduce sheet and rill erosion sequester carbon in plant biomass and soils, increase soil organic matter, capture and recycle excess nutrients, promote biological nitrogen fixation, or reduce particulate emissions into the atmosphere.

Critical Area Planting

In critical areas disturbed by the installation of erosion control measures, plant perennial vegetation such as trees, shrubs, grasses, or legumes.

Diversion

Construct a channel across the slope with a supporting ridge on the lower side to interrupt water flow on slopes, reduce runoff damage, or divert water away from active gullies or critically eroding areas.

Field Border

Establish a strip of permanent vegetation at the edge or around the perimeter of a field to reduce erosion from wind and water or manage insect populations.

Filter Strip

Establish herbaceous vegetation in a strip between cropland and sensitive areas to reduce sediment, organics and dissolved contaminant loadings in runoff, or serve as Zone 3 of a Riparian Forest Buffer.

Grade Stabilization Structure

Install a structure to control head cutting in channels as part of an approved erosion control system.

Grassed Waterway

Construct a graded channel stabilized with suitable vegetation to convey runoff from terraces, diversions, or other water concentrations or to control gully erosion.

Hedgerow Planting

Establish dense vegetation in a linear design to screens and barriers to noise and dust.

Lined Waterway or Outlet

Install a waterway or outlet with an erosion resistant lining of concrete, stone, synthetic fabrics or other permanent material to provide for safe conveyance of runoff from conservation structures or water concentrations or to treat existing gully erosion.

Mulching

Apply plant residues or other suitable materials to the land surface to conserve soil moisture, moderate soil temperature, provide erosion control, suppress weed growth, establish vegetative cover, improve soil condition and increase soil fertility, as part of an erosion control or organic farming system.

Nutrient Management (MGT)

Control the amount, source, placement, form and timing of nutrient applications at either a basic or advanced level (two payment rates are offered). Basic involves a nutrient budget and application record keeping system. Advanced involves more frequent monitoring of the soil system. Both include the proper use of manure or organic byproducts as a plant nutrient source, and improvement in the physical, chemical and biological condition of soil.

Obstruction Removal

Remove and dispose of unwanted or hazardous structures, vegetation, and other materials in order to facilitate the installation of new erosion control measures.

Pest Management (MGT)

Use environmentally sensitive prevention, avoidance, monitoring and suppression strategies to manage weeds, insects, and diseases at either a basic or advanced level (two payment rates are offered). Basic involves crop scouting, economic threshold evaluations and application record keeping. Advanced involves more intensive use of tools or computer programs to reduce impacts further.

Residue Management, Mulch-Till (MGT)

Establish a *new* tillage system that manages the amount, orientation and distribution of crop and other plant residues on the soil surface until just prior to planting to reduce particulate air emissions and to reduce sheet and rill erosion to the soil "T" level. Participants must document a minimum 30% soil surface coverage at planting.

Residue Management, No-Till /Direct Seed (MGT)

Establish a *new* tillage system that manages the amount, orientation and distribution of crop and other plant residues on the soil surface year-round, while growing crops in narrow slots or residue-free strips in untilled soil, in order to reduce particulate air emissions and reduce or control sheet and rill erosion to the soil "T" level.

Riparian Herbaceous Cover

Establish grasses and forbs tolerant of intermittent flooding or saturated soils in riparian areas to reduce sediment and other pollutants, to help stabilize stream bank and shorelines, or to increase net carbon storage in the biomass and soil.

Riparian Forest Buffer

Establish an area of trees and/or shrubs adjacent to water bodies to reduce excess amounts of sediment, organic material, nutrients, and pesticides in surface runoff and reduce excess nutrients and other chemicals in shallow ground water flow.

Spoil Spreading

Properly dispose of surplus materials excavated to permit the installation of approved erosion control practices.

Streambank and Shoreline Protection

Install structural or bio-engineered treatments used to stabilize banks of streams or shorelines, reduce the offsite or downstream effects of sediment.

Strip Cropping

Establish *new* equal width strips of forages or small grains across a field with an alternating pattern of row crops to reduce sheet and rill erosion and the transport of sediment and other water-borne contaminants. Payment is limited to the acres of narrow seeded crops on fields where soil loss is reduced to the soil "T" value.

Structure for Water Control

Install a structure as part of an erosion control system to control the direction or rate of water flow or maintain a desired water surface elevation.

Subsurface Drain

Install corrugated plastic tubing beneath the ground surface to control the water table in fields where a documented phytophthora problem is preventing implementation of a nutrient management system.

Terrace

Construct an earthen embankment (combination ridge and channel) across the field slope to reduce soil erosion or retain runoff for moisture conservation.

Underground Outlet

Install a conduit beneath the surface of the ground to collect surface water from terraces, diversions, surface drains or other approved practices and convey it to a suitable outlet as part of an approved erosion control system.

Windbreak or Shelterbelt Establishment

Establish linear plantings of single or multiple row trees or shrubs to provide living barriers to reduce airborne odors, particulates or chemical drift.

IRRIGATION SYSTEMS: Land must have been irrigated at least 2 of the past 5 years to be eligible. In addition, all irrigation systems must have an efficiency rating of at least 80%, and the contract must include Irrigation Water Management as an agreed-to practice.

Air Resources Management

Install a solar system to power a new or existing irrigation pumping plant;

or replace an existing 150 HP or smaller irrigation pump engine with a new EPA Tier 3 or 4 certified diesel engine.

Constructed Wetland

Construct a shallow water ecosystem to simulate natural wetlands in order to reduce the pollution potential of runoff from agricultural lands.

Critical Area Planting (tailwater system only)

In critical areas disturbed by the installation of a tailwater recovery system, plant perennial vegetation such as trees, shrubs, grasses, or legumes.

Grade Stabilization Structure (tailwater system only)

Install a structure to control head cutting in natural or artificial channels installed as part of a tailwater recovery system.

Irrigation Water Conveyance

Install permanent underground high-pressure pipeline and appurtenances as part of an approved irrigation system.

Irrigation System, Microirrigation

Install an irrigation system for uniform distribution of water directly to the plant root zone by means of surface or subsurface applicators to maintain soil moisture for optimum plant growth, effectively apply agricultural chemicals, or reduce particulate matter emissions.

Irrigation System, Sprinkler

Install an irrigation system to uniformly and efficiently apply water by means of nozzles operated under pressure, to maintain adequate soil water for optimum plant growth, effectively apply agricultural chemicals, or reduce particulate matter emissions.

Irrigation System, Tailwater Recovery

Install an irrigation system with facilities for the collection, storage, and transportation of irrigation tailwater to conserve irrigation water supplies and improve offsite water quality.

Irrigation Water Management (IWM) (MGT) *Required for all contracts with irrigation systems installed*

Control the volume, frequency and application rate of irrigation water in a planned, efficient manner to match the soil infiltration rate, soil water holding capacity and crop need at various growth stages.

This practice requires the development of an IWM plan, soil moisture monitoring, and water application record keeping. It includes the installation of meters, monitors, and other appurtenances that aid in the process of implementing an approved IWM plan.

Lined Waterway or Outlet (tailwater system only)

Install a waterway or outlet with an erosion resistant lining of concrete, stone, synthetic turf reinforcement fabrics or other permanent material to provide for safe conveyance of runoff from tailwater recovery structures or water concentration areas.

Mulching (tailwater system only)

Apply plant residues or other suitable materials to the land surface to provide erosion control on areas disturbed by construction of tailwater facilities.

Obstruction Removal (tailwater system only)

Remove and dispose of unwanted or hazardous structures, vegetation, landscape features, and other materials in order to facilitate the installation of new tailwater recovery practices.

Pond Sealing or Lining (tailwater system only)

As part of a tailwater recovery basin, install a manufactured hydraulic barrier consisting of a functionally continuous sheet of synthetic or partially synthetic, flexible material to control seepage.

Precision Land Forming (tailwater system only)

Re-grade the surface of the land to allow the implementation of other planned measures under an approved tailwater recovery system.

Pumping Plant

Install a permanent pump at an existing water source to provide an adequate water supply for irrigation. Payment is limited to pumps for permanently installed irrigation systems, or pumps required to recycle water through a tailwater recovery system.

Roof Runoff Structure (tailwater system only)

Install structures to collect, control, and transport precipitation from roofs as part of a tailwater recovery system.

Spoil Spreading (tailwater system only)

Properly dispose surplus materials excavated to permit the installation of approved tailwater recovery practices.

Structure for Water Control (tailwater system only)

Install a structure as part of a tailwater recovery system that controls the direction or rate of flow or maintains a desired water surface elevation.

Underground Outlet (tailwater system only)

Install a conduit beneath the surface of the ground to collect surface water from lined waterways or other approved tailwater recovery practices and convey it to a suitable outlet.

Water and Sediment Control Basin (tailwater only)

Install a basin as part of a tailwater recovery system, when needed, to collect and store excess runoff from an agricultural operation.

PASTURE OR GRAZING LAND: Payment is limited to practices designed to address an existing resource concern for livestock that have been housed or grazed on land under the operator's control for at least 12 of the previous 36 months. Consideration will be given for variations in animal numbers normal for the operation. Waivers to this provision can be requested in writing to the State Conservationist.

Air Resources Management (AC or MGT)

Use alternative fuels - E85 or bio-diesel (B20 or higher) - for on-farm agricultural activities;

or install a solar energy-powered pump for the livestock watering system.

Critical Area Planting

In critical areas disturbed by livestock or installation of erosion control measures, plant perennial vegetation such as trees, shrubs, grasses, or legumes.

Diversion

Construct a channel across the slope with a supporting ridge on the lower side to interrupt water flow on slopes, reduce runoff damage, or divert water away from active gullies or critically eroding areas.

Filter Strip

Establish a strip or area of herbaceous vegetation between grazing land and environmentally sensitive areas to reduce sediment and particulate organics in runoff, or serve as Zone 3 of a Riparian Forest Buffer.

Grade Stabilization Structure

Install a structure to control head cutting in channels as part of an approved erosion control system.

Grassed Waterway

Construct a graded channel stabilized with suitable vegetation to convey runoff from terraces, diversions, or other water concentrations or to control gully erosion.

Riparian Herbaceous Cover

Establish grasses and forbs tolerant of intermittent flooding or saturated soils in riparian areas to reduce sediment and other pollutants, stabilize stream banks, and increase net carbon storage in the soil.

Riparian Forest Buffer

Establish trees and/or shrubs adjacent to water bodies to reduce pollutants in surface runoff.

Streambank and Shoreline Protection

Install structural or bio-engineered treatments to stabilize banks of streams or reduce the offsite or downstream effects of sediment.

Structure for Water Control

Install a structure as part of an erosion control system to control the direction or rate of water flow.

Underground Outlet

Install an underground conduit to collect surface water from diversions, surface drains or other approved practices and convey it to a suitable outlet.

Use Exclusion

Control livestock access to surface water areas through the use of fencing, including gates where necessary.

THE FOLLOWING PRACTICES MUST BE PART OF AN APPROVED PRESCRIBED GRAZING SYSTEM:

Animal Trails and Walkways

Establish travel ways to provide or improve access to forage or water or to improve grazing efficiency and distribution.

Brush Management

Remove non-herbaceous plants to restore natural plant community balance, manage noxious woody plants, or improve forage accessibility, quality and quantity.

Fence

Install permanent fencing to divide an area of land to improve distribution and timing of livestock grazing.

Heavy Use Area Protection

Stabilize areas around livestock watering facilities to reduce soil erosion and improve air quality.

Pasture and Hayland Planting

Plant adapted forage species to improve livestock nutrition and/or health or extend the length of the grazing season. Payment is for one planting per pasture area during the life of the contract.

Pipeline

Install permanent underground pipe (inside diameter 8 inches or less) to convey water from a supply source to points of use for livestock.

Prescribed Grazing (MGT)

Actively manage vegetation with grazing animals to improve the health and vigor of forage, maintain a desired plant community, improve water quality, reduce accelerated soil erosion, and improve soil condition.

Pumping Plant for Water

Install a pump to provide a dependable livestock water source.

Spring Development

Utilize available springs and seeps to provide water for livestock.

Stream Crossing

Construct a stabilized area across a stream to provide a travel way for livestock in order to reduce sediment, nutrient, and organic loads in the stream.

Watering Facility

Permanently install a watertight tank or trough to provide access to water and facilitate proper grazing, or to protect streams, ponds and water supplies from contamination.

Water Well

Install a new well, less than 6" in diameter, to replace an existing water supply causing environmental damage.

ANIMAL WASTE MANAGEMENT: Payment is limited to practices designed to address an existing resource concern for livestock that have been housed or grazed on land under the operator's control for at least 12 of the previous 36 months. Consideration will be given for variations in animal numbers normal for the operation. Waivers to this provision can be requested in writing to the State Conservationist.

Note: a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) is required for any contract that includes the storage of animal wastes produced on the farm. NRCS will not provide assistance in the development of a CNMP under the EQIP program. *The CNMP must be developed within the first 12 months of the contract by a certified Technical Service Provider hired by the contract holder.* All portions of the operation where waste is generated or applied, whether under the EQIP contract or not, must be included in the CNMP plan. A program payment (below) is provided to assist the farm operator in completing this requirement.

Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP)

Develop a written plan that details the handling of manure from the point of production to the ultimate disposal site. Include all conservation practices needed to implement the system and a time schedule for implementation. Include a nutrient balance sheet based on actual manure and soil test results when using manure as a soil amendment. Structural conservation practices anticipated for the CNMP may be included in the contract application and will be modified if needed after contract approval. Payment is based on the number of animal units that generate the waste and how the waste is utilized.

Air Resources Management (MGT)

Use alternative fuels - E85 or bio-diesel (B20 or higher) - for on-farm agricultural activities.

Anaerobic Digester

Install a waste treatment impoundment to biologically treat waste and capture biogas for energy, improve air quality, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Closure of Waste Impoundment

Close waste storage ponds no longer used for their intended purpose in an environmentally safe manner as part of an overall waste management system.

Composting Facility

Install a permanent facility to process raw manure into biologically stable organic material to reduce the pollution potential to surface and ground water.

Constructed Wetland

Construct a shallow water ecosystem designed to simulate natural wetlands and reduce the pollution potential of wastewater from agricultural lands.

Critical Area Planting

In critical areas disturbed by the installation of animal waste facilities, plant perennial vegetation such as trees, shrubs, grasses, or legumes.

Diversion

Construct a channel across the slope with a supporting ridge on the lower side to divert water away from farmsteads or agricultural waste systems, reduce runoff damages from upland runoff, or divert water away from active gullies or critically eroding areas.

Obstruction Removal

Remove and dispose of structures, vegetation, landscape features, and other materials necessary to install the waste management system.

Heavy Use Area Protection

Stabilize areas with the least costly suitable material to reduce soil erosion, or improve air and water quality. Payment is limited to areas intensively used by animals during periods when pastures are not available, based on the number of animals that the available pasture normally supports during the growing season.

Payments for pavilion roofs are approved only when other runoff control options are not feasible due to slope or soil limitations.

Manure Transfer

Install a system of structures or conduits to transfer animal manure (including bedding, spilled feed, wash water, and other residues) through a hopper or reception pit, conduit, and/or hauling equipment to a manure storage/ treatment facility, loading area, or to agricultural land for final utilization.

Pumping Plant

Install a pump to transfer wastewater from source to storage areas and/or from storage areas to disposal sites.

Roof Runoff Structure

Install structures that collect, control, and transport precipitation from roofs to prevent runoff contamination by animal wastes, improve water quality or reduce soil erosion.

Spoil Spreading

Dispose surplus materials excavated to permit the installation of approved animal waste management practices.

Solid/Liquid Separation Facility

Install a filtration or screening device, settling tank, or settling basin to separate a portion of solids from the liquid waste stream in order to better manage the associated nutrients.

Underground Outlet

Install an underground conduit to collect surface water from approved practices and convey it to a suitable outlet.

Waste Facility Cover

Install a fabricated rigid, semi-rigid, or flexible membrane over a waste treatment or storage facility to improve water or air quality or capture of biogas for energy production.

Waste Storage Facility

Install a structure, embankment, or pit to temporarily store manure, wastewater, and contaminated runoff prior to its utilization on land or other proper disposal.

Wastewater Treatment Strip

Establish a strip or area of herbaceous vegetation to reduce the loading of nutrients, organics, pathogens, and other contaminants associated with animal manure.

AQUACULTURE PRACTICES: Producers must have a valid NJ state aquaculture license and a *Shellfish Aquaculture Management Plan* that follows the NJDA/NJDEP Recommended Management Practices for Aquatic Farms. A map indicating the gear layout, access points and buffer zones shall be provided to NRCS by the applicant.

For 2008, the following practices are included. Additional practices may be added in future years.

Air Resources Management

Use alternative fuels (MGT) - E85 or bio-diesel (B20 or higher) - for on-farm agricultural activities.

Filter Strip

Establish a strip or area of herbaceous vegetation between the effluent outlet or production water discharge point and any environmentally sensitive areas to reduce sediment and particulate organics in runoff. The strip must meet the requirements of the NJ DEP AMP for filter strips in addition to NRCS standards, including any minimum widths or distances from other land uses.

Shellfish Aquaculture Management

Improve water quality by following either a basic or advanced system of practices designed to reduce or control toxic emissions directly into the water. Systems include use of low-copper paints, upgrading to low-emission equipment, and protection from leaks and spills.

Stream and Shoreline Protection

Stabilize and protect the banks of shorelines estuaries with vegetation or hardscape to prevent the loss of land, or damage to land uses or facilities adjacent to the banks. Required permits are the responsibility of the applicant.

STORM WATER MANAGEMENT: Practices must meet the requirements of the NJ Stormwater Management Rules and treat impervious surfaces that were in existence on its effective date of (February 2, 2004).

Constructed Wetland

Construct a shallow water ecosystem designed to simulate natural wetlands to reduce the pollution potential of runoff from agricultural lands.

Critical Area Planting

In critical areas disturbed by the installation of runoff management practices, plant perennial vegetation such as trees, shrubs, grasses, or legumes.

Diversion

Construct a channel across the slope with a supporting ridge on the lower side to interrupt water flow on slopes, reduce runoff damage, or divert water away from active gullies or critically eroding areas.

Grade Stabilization Structure

Install a structure to control head cutting in natural or artificial channels as part of an approved storm water management system.

Lined Waterway or Outlet

Install a waterway or outlet with an erosion resistant lining of concrete, stone, synthetic turf reinforcement fabrics or other permanent material to provide for safe conveyance of runoff from storm water management structures or water concentration areas.

Mulching

Apply plant residues or other suitable materials to the land surface to provide erosion control, suppress weed growth, or establish vegetative cover.

Obstruction Removal

Remove and dispose of unwanted or hazardous buildings, structures, vegetation, landscape features, and other materials in order to facilitate the installation of new storm water management practices.

Pond Sealing or Lining

Install a manufactured hydraulic barrier consisting of a functionally continuous sheet of synthetic or partially synthetic, flexible material as part of a water and sediment control basin to control seepage.

Precision Land Forming

Re-grade the surface of the land to allow the implementation of other planned measures under an approved storm water runoff management system.

Riparian Herbaceous Cover

Establish grasses and forbs tolerant of intermittent flooding or saturated soils in riparian areas to reduce the amount of sediment and other pollutants or to help stabilize stream bank and shorelines.

Riparian Forest Buffer

Establish an area of trees and/or shrubs adjacent to water bodies to reduce excess amounts of sediment, organic material, nutrients, and pesticides in surface runoff and reduce excess nutrients and other chemicals in shallow ground water flow.

Roof Runoff Structure

Structures that collect, control, and transport precipitation from roofs, installed to reduce soil erosion, increase infiltration, or increase water quantity.

Runoff Management System

Install site-specific components of a runoff management system to meet NJ storm water management regulations.

Spoil Spreading

Dispose of surplus materials excavated to permit the installation of approved storm water runoff management practices.

Structure for Water Control

Install a structure, required as part of a tailwater recovery or storm water management system, which conveys water, controls the direction or rate of flow, or maintains a desired water surface elevation.

Underground Outlet

Install a conduit beneath the surface of the ground to collect surface water from surface drains, lined waterways, or other approved practices and convey it to a suitable outlet.

Water and Sediment Control Basin

Install a basin, as part of a Storm Water Runoff Management System, to collect and store excess runoff water from an agricultural operation.