

## How CSP Works

NRCS in New Jersey, in consultation with the State Technical Committee and local working groups, has selected soil quality, water quality and animals (livestock and wildlife) as the natural resources that are of special concern to the State. Agricultural land and nonindustrial private forest land will be ranked by how well the producer has managed their operation to protect these resources.

Producers can begin the CSP application process by completing a self-screening checklist, available on-line or at their local NRCS office, which helps determine whether CSP is the right program for them. Applications can be submitted once farm records are updated with the Farm Service Agency.

During a nationally announced sign-up period, the applicant will complete a Conservation Measurement Tool with NRCS. The Tool is used to determine the conservation treatment level of the operation. During this process, the applicant must be willing to make decisions and commit to adopting additional practices or activities that will increase the level of conservation treatment on the land. The Tool estimates the level of environmental benefit to be achieved, determines program eligibility and rank, and estimates potential program payments for an approved contract.



Updated May 2011

## Conservation Stewardship Program

Visit the NRCS New Jersey website  
for more information:

[http://www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov/new\\_csp](http://www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov/new_csp)

### For More Information or to Sign-Up, Contact Your Local USDA Service Center:

*Burlington, Camden and Ocean counties*

**Columbus Service Center (1971 Jacsonville-Jobstown Rd)**

Telephone: (609) 267 - 1639

*Mercer, Middlesex and Monmouth counties*

**Freehold Service Center (4000 Kozloski Rd)**

Telephone: (732) 462 - 0075

*Hunterdon, Somerset and Union counties*

**Frenchtown Service Center (687 Pittstown Rd, Suite 2)**

Telephone: (908) 782 - 4614

*Bergen, Morris, Passaic, Sussex and Warren counties*

**Hackettstown Service Center (Bldg #1, 101 Bilby Rd)**

Telephone: (908) 852 - 2576

*Atlantic, Cape May and Cumberland counties*

**Vineland Service Center (1318 South Main Rd, Bldg 5A)**

Telephone: (856) 205 - 1225

*Gloucester and Salem counties*

**Woodstown Service Center (51 Cheney Rd, Suite 2)**

Telephone: (856) 769 - 1126

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Natural Resources Conservation Service



**The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)** encourages agricultural and forestry producers who have achieved a high level of stewardship on their farm or woodlot to maintain existing conservation activities and adopt additional ones.

CSP is a voluntary conservation program that provides financial and technical assistance for operators to continue to conserve and enhance soil, water, air, and related natural resources on their land. CSP provides opportunities to both recognize excellent stewards and deliver valuable new conservation through an entirely new process available to every producer in the state.



## Benefits to Participants

CSP provides participants with two possible types of payments. An annual payment is made for installing new conservation activities and maintaining existing activities. A supplemental payment may be earned by participants who also adopt a resource-conserving crop-rotation.

Through five-year contracts, payments will be made as soon as practicable after October of each year for contract activities installed and maintained in the previous year. For all contracts, CSP payments to a person or legal entity may not exceed \$40,000 in any year and \$200,000 during any 5-year period. Each CSP contract will be limited to \$200,000 over the term of the initial contract period.

## Contract Funding

An enrolled acre of land can only have one land use designation. Land uses include cropland, pasture land, and forest land. Participants determine the use for which they want their land to be considered. For example, wooded areas that are pastured would have to be designated either pasture land or forest land. Land uses will be verified by NRCS as part of the field verification process.

New Jersey is allocated a maximum number of cropland acres (including pasture) and forest land acres that can be enrolled into the program each year. The Conservation Measurement Tool ranking scores are used to select applications for contract development, with the highest scores funded first until the acreage targets are met.

Next, NRCS will request the applicant's conservation activity records and conduct on-site field verification to ensure that information provided by the applicant is accurate. Once information is verified, NRCS and the applicant proceed to develop the contract.

## CSP and Forest Lands

Non-industrial private forest lands (NIPF) are eligible for participation in CSP provided the applicant establishes or updates farm records at their local Farm Service Agency office prior to submitting the CSP application



NIPF is defined as at least 10 percent stocked by single-stemmed woody species of any size that will be at least 4 meters tall at maturity. When viewed from a vertical direction, 10 percent stocked equates to an aerial canopy of leaves and branches of 25 percent or greater.

The minimum area for NIPF classification in New Jersey is 10 acres. Forest openings and incidental areas of non-forestland are eligible provided any one opening does not exceed 3 acres in size. It is estimated that New Jersey has over 80,000 acres of forest land potentially eligible for CSP benefits.

## Eligibility

CSP is available on private agricultural lands and non-industrial private forest lands. The program provides equitable access to all producers, regardless of operation size, crops produced, or geographic location.

Individual producers, legal entities, and corporations may be eligible for the program. Eligible lands include cropland, grassland, improved pasture land, and non-industrial private forest land.

Applicants must:

- Be the operator of record in the USDA farm records management system for the eligible land being offered for enrollment
- Have documented control of the land for the term of the proposed contract
- Include the eligible land in their entire operation as represented for other USDA programs
- Be in compliance with the highly erodible land and wetland conservation provisions of 7 CFR Part 12, and adjusted gross income provisions of 7 CFR Part 1400

## Resource Conserving Crop Rotations

If a producer agrees to implement a new or enhanced resource conserving crop rotation, they may receive a supplemental payment under the program. Existing rotations are not eligible for a supplemental payment.

Resource-conserving crop means a crop that is one of the following:

- A perennial grass
- A legume grown for use as forage, seed for planting, or green manure
- A legume-grass mixture
- A small grain grown in combination with a grass or legume, whether interseeded or planted in rotation

Resource conserving crop rotation means a crop rotation that:

- Includes at least one resource conserving crop
- Reduces soil erosion
- Improves soil fertility and tilth
- Interrupts pest cycles
- In applicable area, reduces depletion of soil moisture or otherwise reduces the need for irrigation

