

May 29, 2009

Applications Accepted through June 12th **USDA-NRCS Announces Availability of \$1.2 Million for New Organic Initiative in Colorado**

LAKESWOOD, CO - The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) recently announced that \$1.2 million has been provided to Colorado for a new initiative to work with agriculture production. Funding for the initiative is being made available as part of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

"The objective of this initiative is to provide technical and financial assistance to organic agricultural producers through EQIP," said Tim Carney, Assistant State Conservationist for Programs, NRCS. *"Support for organic agriculture is a priority of the 2008 Farm Bill and NRCS in Colorado."*

Nationally, \$50 million has been set aside for organic producers and those transitioning to organic production. Organic producers may also apply for assistance under general EQIP.

Under the National Organic Initiative, required minimum core conservation practices will be determined by specific resource concerns. The practices are: Conservation Crop Rotation; Cover Crop; Nutrient Management; Pest Management; Prescribed Grazing; and Forage Harvest Management. States must consider using any appropriate practice that meets the resource concern on a particular operation.

Applications received from organic producers or producers in transition to organic farming will be accepted until **Friday, June 12, 2009**. Applications will be ranked at that time.

Completed applications should be sent to your local USDA-NRCS Service Center. You can locate a Center nearest you by going online at www.co.nrcs.usda.gov and then clicking on 'Find a Service Center' in the left hand column.

Interested producers should visit their nearest USDA-NRCS Service Center to determine eligibility. Additional information on the 2009 EQIP Organic Initiative is available at www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip/ or you can contact Dollie Gonzales via email at dollie.gonzales@co.usda.gov, or phone, 720-544-2821.

-#-