

January 11, 2013

**Colorado NRCS Announces Application Cutoff Date for
\$21 Million in Financial Assistance for EQIP, Salinity, and Special Initiatives Funding
Deadlines are February 15 and April 19, 2013**

Denver – The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Colorado recently announced two application cutoff dates of **Friday, February 15, and April 19, 2013**, to sign up for fiscal year 2013 general Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Salinity Control Program, and Special Initiatives Program funding.

Eligible applications received after the cutoff period may be considered during a later time and will be processed throughout the fiscal year as needed.

A total of \$21 million in financial assistance is available to landowners who implement a quality conservation plan designed to benefit soil, water, air, plants, and/or wildlife resulting in not only productive lands but healthy ecosystems as well.

NRCS continually strives to put conservation planning at the forefront of its programs and initiatives. Conservation plans provide landowners with a comprehensive inventory and assessment of their resources and an appropriate start to improving conservation efforts on their land.

“Landowners must have a conservation plan in place to be considered for funding,” said Phyllis Ann Philipps, State Conservationist, Colorado NRCS. *“We encourage them to contact their local field office right away to be considered for this year’s funding.”*

Nearly \$16 million of the total funding is intended to implement practices associated with general EQIP and the Salinity Control Program, while the remaining \$5 million will help fund the following eight voluntary special initiatives:

- **Organic** – provides financial opportunities for organic producers to address natural resource concerns related to organic production.
- **Air Quality** – provides financial assistance to implement approved conservation practices to address significant air quality resource concerns for designated high priority geographic locations.
- **High Tunnel** – provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to allow them to extend the growing season of high value crops in an environmentally safe manner.
- **Energy** - enables the producer to identify ways to conserve energy on the farm through Agricultural Energy Management Plans (AgEMP), also known as on-farm energy audits.

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- **Sage Grouse (Gunnison and Greater)** – assists landowners within several western slope counties with reducing the threats to the Sage Grouse.
- **Lesser Prairie Chicken** – focuses on the reduction of threats to lesser prairie chicken in the southeastern portion of the state.
- **Ogallala** – provides financial assistance to agriculture producers to address water quantity and quality concerns and conserve water in the Ogallala Aquifer.
- **National Water Quality** - works in priority watersheds to help farmers and ranchers improve water quality and aquatic habitats in impaired streams.

All applications will be evaluated and funded on a watershed basis, with local and watershed workgroup input on conservation priorities.

EQIP provides financial assistance for conservation systems such as animal waste management facilities, irrigation system efficiency improvements, fencing, and water supply development for improved grazing management, riparian protection, and wildlife habitat enhancement.

Interested applicants may apply at their local NRCS Service Center. To locate an office near you please click on this link: [Service Center Locator](#). Applications **MUST** be received in your local NRCS Service Center by close of business on **Friday, February 15 and/or April 19, 2013.**

For additional information on EQIP, please contact Dawn Jackson, Assistant State Conservationist for Programs, at 720-544-2805 or email her at dawn.jackson@co.usda.gov. You can also visit our website at www.co.nrcs.usda.gov.

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