



Natural Resources Conservation Service  
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United States Department of Agriculture

*Our People...Our Islands...In Harmony*

# **NEWS**

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**December 6, 2012**

For more information, call:  
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### **Federal Funds Available for Agricultural Conservation Projects**

HONOLULU, December 6, 2012 -- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) reminds potential applicants to contact their local NRCS office soon to find out if they are eligible for the agency's most common Farm Bill Programs (Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program, Agricultural Management Assistance Program, and Conservation Stewardship Program). Applications for the second ranking period of 2013 are due at NRCS offices by close of business on December 21, 2012. The NRCS Office Locator is available at [www.pia.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.pia.nrcs.usda.gov).

"We are encouraging farmers and ranchers to utilize the federal funding available to help improve conservation on private land," said Mr. Angel Figueroa, NRCS Director of the Pacific Islands Area (PIA).

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers through contracts up to a maximum term of ten years in length. These contracts provide financial assistance to help plan and implement conservation practices that address natural resource concerns and for opportunities to improve soil, water, plant, animal, air and related resources on agricultural land and non-industrial private forestland. In addition, a purpose of EQIP is to help producers meet Federal, State, Tribal and local environmental regulations.

The Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) is a voluntary program for conservation-minded landowners who want to develop and improve wildlife habitat on agricultural land, nonindustrial private forest land, and Indian land.

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The Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to voluntarily address issues such as water management, water quality, and erosion control by incorporating conservation into their farming operations.

“Food self-sufficiency in Hawaii would keep more money in Hawaii’s economy and provide more fresh, local food options for our families. That’s why it’s critical we support our farmers and ranchers. These Farm Bill conservation programs are among the most valuable federal agricultural programs for Hawaii. The Agricultural Management Assistance Program can assist farmers and ranchers by covering a significant portion of the cost of new irrigation or animal watering systems. Given the droughts we've endured over the past several years, making sure farmers and ranchers have a helping hand is especially important,” said Congresswoman Mazie Hirono, who was able to get Hawaii added to the Agricultural Management Program in the 2008 Farm Bill.

Conservation Stewardship Program is offered in all 50 states, and the Pacific and Caribbean areas through continuous sign-ups. The program provides many conservation benefits including improvement of water and soil quality, wildlife habitat enhancements and adoption of conservation activities that address the effects of climate change. Eligible lands include cropland, pastureland, rangeland, nonindustrial private forest land and agricultural land under the jurisdiction of an Indian tribe.

Learn more about Farm Bill Programs and find out about other NRCS services at [www.pia.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.pia.nrcs.usda.gov).

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