



TRADEWINDS

EQIP FUNDS: TIME IS RUNNING OUT

Maryland farmers should come into NRCS field service centers **NOW** to learn how conservation planning and programs can assist them in solving the natural resource concerns on their land. NRCS is encouraging farmers to submit applications for participation in 2008 conservation programs. Applications received in field offices will be considered for eligibility, and if they meet program requirements and priorities, can be quickly funded. Applications that have an up-to-date conservation plan will be given funding priorities.

A partial list of conservation practices eligible under the 2008 Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is listed below. Other conservation practices are available through EQIP and other Farm Bill Conservation Programs.

Livestock Practices

- Heavy Use Area Protection
- Poultry Amendment for Treatment of Ag Waste (Poultry Litter Amendment)
- Waste Storage Facility
- Windbreak Shelterbelt
- Feed Management Program (Dairy)

Grazing Practices *

- Fence
- Livestock Watering Facilities

Prescribed Grazing

Forestry Practices

- Hedgerow Planting
- Tree & Shrub Planting

Agronomy Practices

- Irrigation Sprinkler and Micro-Irrigation
- Nutrient Management
- Pest Management
- Residue Management to Improve Soil Quality (Mulch Till & No Till)
- Waterways



HUA Protection Pad for a Poultry House

* Must have a minimum of 8 animal units already on pasture
 ** Indicates a new conservation practice for EQIP in 2008



TALBOT SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Our office will be closed on the following holidays:

President's Day—Feb. 18th

SOIL FUN FACT:

Although the soil surface appears solid, air moves freely in and out of it. The air in the upper 8 inches of a well-drained soil is completely renewed about every hour.

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Program Applications will be evaluated at the end of each month for funding.

Evaluations will be conducted on January 25th and February 29th.

For EQIP Eligibility and Program Rules, goto page 3

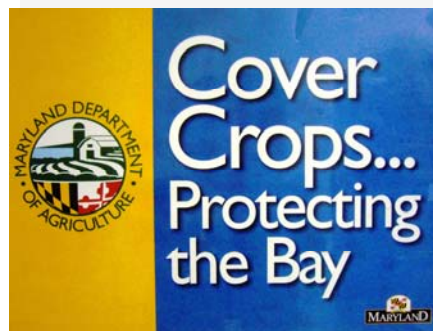
SPRING CERTIFICATION FOR COVER CROP

Traditional Cover Crop
Spring kill-down or suppression may not occur before March 1, 2008.

No nutrients can be applied before March 1, 2008. Potash and Lime can be applied at anytime.

Within two weeks, or after the kill-down or suppression of the Cover Crop has been achieved, but no later than June 2, 2008, the applicant must certify to the SCD that the Cover Crop has been suppressed or killed down. The final cost-share payment will be determined by the number of qualified acres which have met all of the program requirements.

Any acres fall certified in the traditional program that are harvested are inelig-



ble for any payments.

At the time of Spring Certification the applicant must have submitted their Annual Implementation Report (AIR) to Nutrient Management for the previous crop year in order to meet the Nutrient Management cross compliance guidelines. No Spring Payment will be issued until this reporting form is on file with Nutrient Management.

Commodity Cover Crop
No nutrients can be applied before March 1, 2008. Potash and Lime can be applied at anytime.

All Commodity Cover Crop applicants submitted a Fall Certification and a Claim For Payment for the total amount of the eligible payment therefore no other paperwork is required for the Commodity Cover Crop Program.

For more information, contact Levin Schwaninger.

2008 ENVIROTHON

The Eastern Shore Regional Envirothon (ESRE) for 2008 will be held at Pickering Creek Audubon Center on April 23rd, 2008.

Following the ESRE, the top teams from each county will compete at the Maryland Envirothon, which will be held at Harford Glen Environmental Education Center in Bel Air, MD from June 17th through the 19th.

The top team from the Maryland Envirothon will be able to compete at the Canon Envirothon 2008 Arizona. The competition will be held at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, AZ from July 28th through Aug 3, 2008.

Good luck to all the teams!

TALBOT SCD CELEBRATES 50 YEARS

The Talbot Soil Conservation District is celebrating its 50th anniversary on April 25th, 2008. We are planning on having our building dedication ceremony around our 50th anniversary.

If you would like to attend, please watch for announcements as we will be sending out more information at a later date for the ceremony.

Below: The current progress as of Friday, January 28th, of the New Talbot County Agriculture Service Center.



EQIP ELIGIBILITY RULES

Individuals or entities engaged in the production of crops or livestock on eligible land may participate in the EQIP program. EQIP offers contracts that provide incentive payments and financial assistance to develop a management plan or implement conservation practices. EQIP contracts have a minimum contract length of one year after the last scheduled practice is completed. The maximum contract length is 10 years. EQIP activities are carried out according to a conservation plan and schedule that NRCS develops with the participant. This plan identifies the appropriate conservation practice(s) that will address identified resource concerns and provide environmental benefits. The participant agrees to implement practices as scheduled in the contract and according to Maryland NRCS conservation practice standards and designs.

Participant Eligibility

To be eligible to participate in EQIP, an applicant must meet all of the following eligibility criteria:

- Be an **agricultural producer** who is engaged in production of livestock or agricultural products, and have produced and sold at least \$1000 of agricultural products in a year or file an IRS Schedule F. For livestock owners the value of pasture can be used for producer eligibility. NRCS will determine the value of forage on a per ton basis. Forest land is exempt from the \$1000 minimum, but the applicant must have a forest management or stewardship plan.
- Have an interest in the farming operation that is associated with the land being offered for enrollment in EQIP.
- Have control of the land for the term of the proposed contract. For structural practices, the applicant and the landowner must sign the application and written concurrence must be submitted by the landowner.
- Be in compliance with USDA's highly erodible land and wetland conservation compliance provisions of the Farm Bill.



Prescribed Grazing through EQIP

- For any entity, provide a list of all members of the entity and embedded entities along with the each member's Social Security Number and percent-age interest. All members must have their signatures notarized on a NRCS Power of Attorney Form.

REMEMBER: Funding in EQIP is not guaranteed. Applications are ranked based on gain of environmental benefit and cost effectiveness of the proposed practices.

TALBOT SCD HIRES A NEW CONSERVATION PLANNER

The Talbot Soil Conservation District hired a new Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) Conservation Planner effective January 30th, 2008. The District hired Shawn Smith, who is currently a soil conservation planner funded through a contributing agreement between the NRCS and the District.

Shawn will be assisting in the Maryland Agriculture Cost-Share program (MACS) as well as federal farm bill programs such as CSP, EQIP and WHIP. He is delighted to be working in the same county he grew up in and working for Soil Conservation.



Shawn was a student intern with the Soil Conservation District from Easton High School from 1998-2000. While he was attending the University of Maryland, College Park, he interned with the NRCS during the summer of 2006.

After he finished college with a Bachelor of Science in Soil Science, he began work as a District conservation planner.



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2008 WINTER NEWSLETTER

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