Indiana Natural Resources Conservation Service

EQIP

Environmental Quality Incentives Program

OVERVIEW

Private citizens own over 90 percent of the land in Indiana which includes nearly 15 million acres of farmland and about 4 million acres of forestland, making stewardship absolutely critical to the health of our environment. Each day, farmers and forest landowners are making decisions about natural resource use and management that impacts soil and water quality. With the **Natural Resources Conservation Service's** help, many are creating more productive lands while maintaining healthy ecosystems.

Grade stabilization structure

The **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)** provides financial and technical assistance to farmers to address natural resource concerns and deliver environmental benefits, such as improved water and air quality, conserved ground and surface water, reduced soil erosion and sedimentation, or improved or created wildlife habitat.

BENEFITS

Eligible program participants receive financial and technical assistance to implement conservation practices, or activities like conservation planning, that address natural resource concerns on their land. EQIP dollars can be used for wildlife enhancement, livestock watering facilities, pastureland improvement, manure management, soil health practices (e.g., cover crops or no till), water quality practices, forestry management, etc. Payments are made to participants after conservation practices and activities identified in an EQIP plan of operations are implemented.

ELIGIBILITY

Farmers and owners of non-industrial private forestland and Indian tribes are eligible to apply for EQIP. Eligible land includes cropland, pastureland, non-industrial private forestland and other farmlands.

WHAT'S NEW IN EQIP

- The former Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) was folded into EQIP.
- Advance payment opportunities now exist for military veterans.
- Advance payments for socially disadvantaged, beginning and limited resource farmers, Indian tribes, and veterans were raised from 30 percent to 50 percent for practices that can be completed in 90 days from the advance payment.
- Payment limitations are set at $450,000 with no ability to waive.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

EQIP practices include fencing for livestock

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ADDITIONAL ELIGIBILITY

Socially disadvantaged, beginning and limited resource farmers, Indian tribes, and veterans are eligible for an increased payment rate and may receive advance payment of up to 50 percent to purchase materials and services needed to implement conservation practices included in their EQIP contract.

Applicants must:

- Control or own eligible land
- Comply with adjusted gross income limitation (AGI) provisions (don't apply until 2015)
- Be in compliance with the highly erodible land and wetland conservation requirements
- Develop an NRCS EQIP plan of operations

Additional restrictions and program requirements may apply.

HOW TO APPLY

NRCS will help eligible producers develop a **conservation plan**, which will become the basis of the EQIP **application**.

Landowners may apply at any time by contacting their local District Conservationist at http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/in/contact/ or visiting: www.nrcs.usda.gov/getstarted.

EQIP applications will be ranked based on a number of factors, including the environmental benefits and cost effectiveness of the proposal.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information visit the Indiana NRCS EQIP website at: http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/in/programs/financial/eqip/

www.in.nrcs.usda.gov

Cover crop planted into no till.