



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Syracuse, N.Y., September 26, 2012 - USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) today announced that the ranking period cut-off date for the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) is January 18, 2013. Producers interested in CSP should submit applications to their local NRCS office by the deadline so that their applications can be considered during the first ranking period of 2013.

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) presents a significant shift in how NRCS provides conservation program payments. CSP participants will receive an annual land use payment for operation-level environmental benefits they produce. Under CSP, participants are paid for conservation performance: the higher the operational performance, the higher their payment.

"CSP is one of our most popular conservation programs, and we expect to receive many applications," NRCS State Conservationist Don Pettit said. "I encourage all farmers and ranchers who are interested in applying to contact their local NRCS office as soon as possible so they can meet the deadline."

CSP addresses seven resource concerns (soil quality, soil erosion, water quality, water quantity, air quality, plant resources, and animal resources) as well as energy. The program has made a few updates with the 2013 program roll out to help the program participant address these resource concerns. Eight (8) brand new enhancements and 6 new bundles combinations has been added to the CSP program.

A CSP self-screening checklist is available to help potential applicants determine if CSP is suitable for their operation. The checklist highlights basic information about CSP eligibility requirements, contract obligations and potential payments. It is available from local NRCS offices (<http://www.ny.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/csp/index.html>) and on the CSP Web page (<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detailfull/national/programs/financial/csp/?&cid=stelprdb1046187>).

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USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) helps America's farmers and ranchers conserve the Nation's soil, water, air and other natural resources. All programs are voluntary and offer science-based solutions that benefit both the landowner and the environment.

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