

FARM BILL (GLOSSARY OF TERMS)



Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is a land conservation program administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA). In exchange for a yearly rental payment, farmers enrolled in the program agree to remove environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production and plant species that will improve environmental health and quality. Contracts for land enrolled in CRP are 10-15 years in length. The long-term goal of the program is to re-establish valuable land cover to help improve water quality, prevent soil erosion, and reduce loss of wildlife habitat.

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) provides financial and technical assistance to help conserve agricultural lands and wetlands and their related benefits. Under the Agricultural Land Easements component, NRCS helps American Indian tribes, state and local governments and non-governmental organizations protect working agricultural lands and limit non-agricultural uses of the land. Under the Wetlands Reserve Easements component, NRCS helps to restore, protect and enhance enrolled wetlands.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to plan and implement conservation practices that improve soil, water, plant, animal, air and related natural resources on agricultural land and non-industrial private forestland. EQIP may also help producers meet Federal, State, Tribal, and local environmental regulations.

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) helps agricultural producers maintain and improve their existing conservation systems and adopt additional conservation activities to address priority resources concerns. Participants earn CSP payments for conservation performance - the higher the performance, the higher the payment.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) encourages partners to join in efforts with producers to increase the restoration and sustainable use of soil, water, wildlife and related natural resources on regional or watershed scales. Through the program, NRCS and its partners help producers install and maintain conservation activities in selected project areas. Partners leverage RCPP funding in project areas and report on the benefits achieved.

Sodsaver- aims to dis-incentivize converting native grassland to cropland by restricting crop insurance coverage or premium subsidy to cropland that is newly converted from native sod. This provision was established in the 2008 Farm Bill and re-authorized in the 2014 Farm Bill.

Conservation Compliance- requires producers to have a conservation plan approved by and on file with USDA if they plant annually tilled crops on highly erodible soil, and prohibits producers from planting on converted wetlands or converting wetlands for crop production. The 2014 Farm Bill requires producers, and any affiliated individuals or entities to comply with these provisions that participate in most programs administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Risk Management Agency (RMA).

Voluntary Public Access- Habitat Improvement Program (VPA-HIP) enables state and tribal governments to increase public access to private lands for recreational opportunities and enhance habitat for game, fish, and other wildlife. VPA-HIP is a competitive grants program that offers states and American Indian governments funding to develop public access programs for private land. The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) administers the program by providing technical assistance and block grants to qualifying states and tribes. Each state and tribe that receives VPA-HIP support uses that funding to develop new public access programs or supplement existing programs. Individual landowners and other private entities can then apply to the state and tribal programs directly for rental payments and technical services in exchange for voluntarily opening their lands for hunting, fishing, hiking, and other activities.