



## Conservation Stewardship Program

CSP

[Home](#) > [Programs & Initiatives](#) > Conservation Stewardship Program

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) helps you build on your existing conservation efforts while strengthening your operation.

## On This Page



[CONTACT INFORMATION](#)



[HOW TO GET ASSISTANCE](#)



[RELATED NEWS AND EVENTS](#)



USDA is increasing the minimum annual payment for new and renewed contracts for agricultural producers participating in the Conservation Stewardship Program from \$1,500 to \$4,000 starting in fiscal year 2024. Available practices and practice standards vary by [state](#). Contact your local NRCS office to get started.

Whether you are looking to improve grazing conditions, increase crop resiliency, or develop wildlife habitat, we can custom design a CSP plan to help you meet those goals. We can help you identify natural resource problems in your operation and provide technical and financial assistance to solve those problems or attain higher stewardship levels in an environmentally beneficial and cost-effective manner.

## How It Works

If you are already taking steps to improve the condition of the land, chances are, CSP can help you find new ways to meet your goals.

NRCS works one-on-one with producers to develop a conservation plan that outlines and enhances existing efforts, using new conservation practices or activities, based on management objectives for your operation. Producers implement practices and activities in their conservation plan that expands on the benefits of cleaner water and air, healthier soil and better wildlife habitat, all while improving their agricultural operations.

For example, if you have been planting a cover crop, you may decide to try an enhancement for a multi-species cover crop or implement a deep-rooted cover crop to break up soil compaction and further improve the health of your soil.

CSP offers annual payments for implementing these practices on your land and operating and maintaining existing conservation efforts. Want to take it a step further? CSP also offers bundles where you can select a suite of enhancements and receive a higher payment rate.



# Inflation Reduction Act in Action

Thanks to additional funding from the Inflation Reduction Act through CSP, these Idaho farmers are getting help implementing several Climate-Smart Agriculture and Forestry Mitigation Activities.

READ MORE



## Benefits

CSP is for working lands and is the largest conservation program in the United States. Thousands of people voluntarily enroll in the program because it helps them enhance natural resources and improve their business operation.

CSP participants are seeing real results. Some of these benefits include:

- Enhanced resiliency to weather and market volatility
- Decreased need for agricultural inputs
- Improved wildlife habitat conditions

## Conservation at Work Videos

You can watch how farmers and ranchers across the country are implementing CSP activities and other conservation activities in our [Conservation at Work video series](#). For example, see how producers are using the cover crop conservation practice to improve soil health, water efficiency, reduce use of fertilizer and improve pest control.

## CSP Contracts

The program represents a genuine commitment to conservation – CSP contracts are for five years, with the opportunity to compete for a contract renewal if you successfully fulfill the initial contract and agree to achieve additional conservation objectives. An NRCS conservation planner will work closely with you, throughout the entire contract process.

Contract payments are based on two components:

- Payments to maintain the existing level of conservation, based on the land uses included in the contract and an NRCS assessment of existing stewardship at the time of enrollment, and
- Payments to implement additional conservation activities.

Most participants will be eligible for a \$4000 minimum payment during any year that their total annual contract payment falls below the minimum payment amount.

## CSP Renewals

Existing CSP participants may be eligible to renew their contract for an additional 5-year term during the fifth year of their initial contract. Participants who have met the terms of their initial contract and who agree to implement more conservation activities can compete for a renewal contract. To meet the renewal stewardship threshold, the participant must agree to meet or exceed two additional priority resource concerns or agree to adopt or improve conservation activities to achieve higher levels of conservation for two existing priority resource concerns.

## Technical Assistance

NRCS offers technical assistance at no cost. Producers can use our personalized advice and information, based on the latest science and research, to make informed decisions about their land.

Technical Service Providers (TSP) can help producers plan, design and implement conservation practices or develop conservation activity plans to improve their agricultural operations. For more information on the Technical Service Provider program, visit the [TSP page](#).

Technical assistance is also offered through our [Conservation Technical Assistance](#) (CTA) program

Need a local Technical Service Provider? Visit the [locate a TSP](#)  page.

## How To Get Started

The first step in the process, is to notify NRCS of your interest in CSP. Then a conservation planner will schedule a visit to your property. During that visit, they will walk the land with you to discuss and review any resource concerns. Following the site visit, the conservation planner will develop a conservation plan that includes a variety of conservation practices, activities and enhancements to improve the level of conservation benefit and to address the resource concerns.

Applications for NRCS conservation programs are accepted on a continuous basis. However, application ranking dates are set at key times throughout the year.

- Find application ranking dates for your state.
- See payment schedules for your state.
- See application.

For more information on CSP enhancements and bundles, please visit our [Enhancements and Bundles](#) page.

## CSP Fact Sheet:

 [Is CSP Right For Me?](#) (922.1 KB)

## CSP Data in RCA Data Viewer

Results data for CSP and other NRCS programs are housed on the [RCA Data Viewer](#).

To learn more about CSP, contact your [local NRCS office](#).



## CSP Success Stories

We work with some of the most amazing people on earth – farmers, ranchers and foresters that value the health of our environment as much as they do their products and their bottom line.

Explore the links below to learn more about these conservationists at heart and how they are utilizing CSP to maintain viable business operations providing food, fiber, and energy that contribute to the economy, creating a more sustainable future for all of us.

### Celebrating a Conservation Milestone 7 Millionth Acre CSP



# Ready to get started?

Contact your local service center to start your application.

# Find Your Local Service Center

USDA Service Centers are locations where you can connect with Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service, or Rural Development employees for your business needs. Enter your state and county below to find your local service center and agency offices. If this locator does not work in your browser, please visit [offices.usda.gov](https://offices.usda.gov).

- Please select -



SEARCH

## How to Get Assistance

### Step 1: Make a Plan

**Do you farm or ranch and want to make improvements to the land that you own or lease?**

Natural Resources Conservation Service offers technical and financial assistance to help farmers, ranchers and forest landowners.

 [Print this information](#)

**To get started with NRCS, we recommend you stop by your local NRCS field office. We'll discuss your vision for your land.**

NRCS provides landowners with free technical assistance, or advice, for their land. Common technical assistance includes: resource assessment, practice design and resource monitoring. Your conservation planner will help you determine if financial assistance is right for you.

Step 2: Start an  
Application

+

Step 3: Check your  
eligibility

+

Step 4: Rank your  
application

+

Step 5: Implement your  
plan

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## Related News and Events

## NEWS

### NRCS Wisconsin Announces Application Deadline for Conservation Stewardship Program

January 06, 2025

## PRESS RELEASE

NRCS Texas Announces  
Application Period for the

## Conservation Stewardship Program

December 17, 2024

-- STATE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

## Vermont Climate Subcommittee

January 10, 2025


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# AskUSDA

One central entry point for you to access information and help from USDA

 [Ask.USDA.gov](https://ask.usda.gov)

 1-833-ONE-USDA

 [askusda@usda.gov](mailto:askusda@usda.gov)

[ASK A QUESTION](#)



## Policies and Statements

- FOIA
- Information Quality
- Our Performance
- Privacy Policy
- Accessibility Statement
- Non-Discrimination Statement

## Resources

- OneFPAC - Employee Links
- eDirectives
- Glossary
- USDA CARES Partner Portal
- No Fear Act Data
- Open Government
- Plain Writing
- Report Fraud on USDA Contract [↗](#)
- Sitemap

## Related Sites

- USDA.gov
- AskUSDA
- Office of the Inspector General
- USA.gov [↗](#)
- WhiteHouse.gov [↗](#)

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