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NEWS RELEASE

Tennessee sets application cut-off period for EQIP and CSP Inflation Reduction Act funding

NASHVILLE, February 17, 2023 – The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Tennessee announced an application cut-off period of Thursday, March 23, 2023, for Tennessee agricultural producers and forest landowners to submit applications to participate in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and the Conservation Stewardship Program to adopt climate smart practices through the [Inflation Reduction Act](#).

The Inflation Reduction Act represents the single largest investment in climate and clean energy solutions in American history and is estimated to help hundreds of thousands of farmers and ranchers gain access to conservation assistance and apply conservation to millions of acres of land.

“This is a once-in-a-generation investment in climate-smart practices that create value and economic opportunities for Tennessee producers,” said NRCS Tennessee State Conservationist Sheldon Hightower. *“Agriculture plays a critical role in Tennessee’s effort to address climate change and we’re using this funding to bolster our existing programs, maximize climate benefits, and foster other environmental benefits across the landscape.”*

The Inflation Reduction Act provides increased funding levels over five years to support USDA’s conservation programs that yield climate change mitigation benefits, beginning in fiscal year 2023 and rapidly building over four years. This investment means that more producers will have access to conservation assistance through several NRCS conservation programs, including:

- \$8.45 billion for the [Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#)
- \$4.95 billion for the [Regional Conservation Partnership Program](#)
- \$3.25 billion for the [Conservation Stewardship Program](#)
- \$1.4 billion for the [Agricultural Conservation Easement Program](#)

Producers interested in assistance for Environmental Quality Incentives Program – Inflation Reduction Act or Conservation Stewardship Program – Inflation Reduction Act should apply by March 23 to be considered for funding in the current cycle. However, Tennessee NRCS accepts producer applications for its voluntary conservation programs year-round. Funding is provided through a competitive process and will include an opportunity to address the unmet demand from producers who have previously sought funding for climate-smart conservation activities.

Click [here](#) for a list of acceptable climate smart practices and mitigation activities.

For more information, contact your [local NRCS office](#) or contact Robert Boettcher, Acting Assistant State Conservationist for Programs, at robert.boettcher@usda.gov, 615-277-2544.

Please visit the NRCS Tennessee website [here](#).

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