



Conservation Stewardship Program

Payments and Benefits

June 2010

CSP: Overview

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) is a voluntary program that offers payments to agricultural and forestry landowners that maintain a high level of conservation on their land and adopt higher levels of stewardship. Eligible lands include cropland, pastureland, rangeland and non-industrial forestland.

Payments and Benefits: Overview

Annual payments for conservation practices are made after October 1 each fiscal year for activities implemented the year before. Payment rates are based on a number of factors, including:

- Number of eligible acres
- Land use
- Conservation performance

Additionally, for the second sign-up, USDA is implementing a split payment structure, with one payment rate for existing conservation activities and a higher payment rate for new activities. A supplemental payment also is available for adopting a resource-conserving crop rotation.

Historically underserved producers, such as beginning farmers or ranchers, or landowners with limited resources, may receive a minimum payment of \$1,000 per year if the annual contract payment is less than \$1,000.

Restrictions

The following practices are NOT eligible for payments under CSP:

- The design, construction, or maintenance of animal waste storage or treatment facilities
- Activities performed at no cost to the landowner
- Practices or enhancements for which the landowner is already receiving payment through another USDA conservation program

Limitations

Payment Limit. A person or legal entity may have more than one CSP contract but, for all CSP contracts combined, may not receive more than \$40,000 in any year or more than \$200,000 during any five-year period.

Contract Limit. The contract limit is the same as the payment limit except in the case of joint operations, for which the contract limit is \$80,000 per fiscal year and \$400,000 over the term of the contract period.

Payment limits and contract limits do not apply in the case of federally recognized Indian tribes or Alaska Native corporations.

More Information

Interested landowners are encouraged to work with their local NRCS field office to determine eligibility and complete the application process. Additional information can be found online at <http://www.or.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/csp/index.html/>.

