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Conservation Stewardship Program Signup

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will be conducting a sign up for the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) for new enrollments for federal fiscal year (FY) 2014. Starting today through January 17, 2014, producers interested in participating in the program can submit applications to NRCS.

The CSP is an important Farm Bill conservation program that helps established conservation stewards with taking their level of natural resource management to the next level to improve both their agricultural production and provide valuable conservation benefits such as cleaner and more abundant water, as well as healthier soils and better wildlife habitat.

The program emphasizes conservation performance —producers earn higher payments for higher performance. Some popular enhancements used by farmers and ranchers include:

- Using new nozzles that reduce the drift of pesticides, lowering input costs, and making sure pesticides are used where they are most needed.
- Modifying water facilities to prevent animals from being trapped.
- Rotating feeding areas and monitoring key grazing areas to improve grazing management.

While local NRCS offices accept the CSP applications year round, NRCS evaluates applications during announced ranking periods. To be eligible for this year's enrollment, producers must have their applications submitted to the NRCS by the January 17, 2014, closing date.

A CSP self-screening checklist is available to help producers determine if the program is suitable for their operation. The checklist highlights basic information about the CSP eligibility requirements, stewardship threshold requirements, and payment types. For the checklist and additional information, visit the CSP Web site <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/csp/>

or visit your local U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) NRCS office.

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