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USDA Reminds Farmers to Certify Conservation Compliance

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) reminds farmers that the 2014 Farm Bill requires producers to file a Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation Certification form (AD-1026) with their local USDA service center by June 1, 2015, in order to become or remain eligible for crop insurance premium support.

Most farmers already have a certification form on file since it's required for participation in most USDA programs such as marketing assistance loans, farm storage facility loans and disaster assistance. However farmers, such as specialty crop growers who receive federal crop insurance premium support, but may not participate in other USDA programs, also must now file a certification form to maintain their crop insurance premium support. "USDA employees are working very hard to get the word out about this new Farm Bill provision," said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. "While many producers will not need to take action, we want to help make sure that those who are required to act do so by the June 1 deadline. We want all eligible producers to be able to maintain their ability to protect their operations with affordable insurance."

Producers should visit their local USDA service center and talk with their crop insurance agent before the June 1, 2015, deadline to ask questions, get additional information or learn more about conservation compliance procedures. Producers that file their form by the deadline will be eligible for federal crop insurance premium support during the 2016 reinsurance year, which begins July 1, 2015. USDA will publish a rule outlining the linkage of conservation compliance with federal crop insurance premium support. Go to <http://go.usa.gov/3Wy5J> to view a copy of the rule.

The Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation Certification form is available at local USDA service center or online at www.fsa.usda.gov/AD1026form. When a farmer completes this form, USDA Farm Service Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Service staff will outline any additional actions that may be required for compliance with highly erodible land and wetland provisions. USDA's Risk Management Agency, through the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation, manages the federal crop insurance program that provides the modern farm safety net for America's farmers and ranchers. Today's announcement was made possible by the 2014 Farm Bill, which builds on historic economic gains in rural America over the past six years, while achieving meaningful reform and billions of dollars in savings for the taxpayer. Since enactment, USDA has implemented many provisions of this critical legislation, providing disaster relief to farmers and ranchers; strengthening risk management tools; expanding access to rural credit; funding critical research; establishing innovative public-private conservation partnerships; developing new markets for rural-made products; and investing in infrastructure, housing and community facilities to help improve quality of life in rural America. For more information, visit www.usda.gov/farmbill.