

Cost-Share Changes for FY 2010


Since our fiscal year started (July 1, 2009), a few changes have been made to the state cost-share program that you may or may not be aware of. We are providing this information to you for your reference. Please see below:

Terrace Practices – removed the dollar limit of \$500/Acre; (Note: The 40 acre limit is still in place.)

Reflagging Policy – revised to read, “The landowner has the choice, should the practice require restaking, of setting steel posts (the number and location established by the Technicians) by the flags **OR** receive a 10% reduction in cost-share assistance.

Landowner Eligibility – If a landowner received cost-share assistance in the amount of \$10,000 or more in the previous fiscal year, he is not eligible to receive assistance the next fiscal year for a Sheet and Rill/Gully practice.

If you have any questions, please contact our office at 660-646-5687.



Reflagging Policy CHANGE

Should a cost-share practice require restaking, a landowner has the choice of setting steel posts (the number of posts and location established by the Technicians) by the flags **OR** receive a 10% reduction in cost-share assistance. **(Revised 9/21/09)**

NOTICE

FY 11 Pond Evaluations Cancelled

Due to changes in State Cost-Share funding, the Livingston County Field Office will not be looking at pond sites during the spring 2010 for sites to be built after July 1, 2010. Last year the Board of Supervisors selected 10 sites to be built, however there was not funding to build these sites this fiscal year. As money becomes available the board will fund these sites. A landowner may sign up at any time for cost-share assistance. It is the Field Office's hope to evaluate future sites in the fall of 2010 or spring of 2011. For more information regarding pond sites or to sign up for cost-share assistance, stop by the Livingston County SWCD!

NRCS Financial Assistance Supports Organic Growers, High Tunnels

COLUMBIA, MO – The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has \$1.2 million to help Missouri farmers produce organic products, and another \$150,000 for a pilot project to introduce all growers to high tunnel structures that extend the growing season for crops.

State Conservationist J.R. Flores says landowners may apply until March 19 for cost-share funding for both initiatives through NRCS' Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

The \$1.2 million available in Missouri is part of a \$50 million nationwide initiative to provide financial assistance to National Organic Program (NOP) Certified Organic producers as well as those transitioning to organic production.

EQIP promotes agricultural production and environmental quality. Through EQIP, farmers and ranchers receive financial and technical assistance to help install structural conservation practices and to implement management systems that promote conservation.

EQIP may pay for up to 75 percent of the costs associated with installing eligible practices, including high tunnels. For those qualifying as beginning farmers, limited-resource farmers, or socially disadvantaged farmers, EQIP funds are available for up to 90 percent of installation costs. Payments for organic operations may not exceed \$20,000 per year, or \$80,000 during any six-year period.

High Tunnels

Flores says high tunnels, also known as hoop houses, increase the availability of locally grown produce and other specialty crops in a conservation-friendly way. “High tunnels can help producers extend their grow-

ing seasons and also expand the availability of healthy, locally grown crops,” Flores says. “So their use can benefit producers and consumers.”

High tunnels are made of ribs of plastic or metal pipe covered with a layer of plastic sheeting. NRCS will offer financial assistance for a high tunnel(s) that cover up to 5 percent of an acre (2,178 square feet). Depending of the size of your tunnel will determine how many you can place on your 2,178 square feet of ground. Producers may build larger tunnels and pay 100 percent of the extra costs themselves. To receive assistance, eligible producers must use commercially manufactured high tunnel kits, and no electrical, heating or mechanical ventilation system can be added.

EQIP funds are also available to help fund supporting practices associated with the use of high tunnels. Examples of supporting practices include, but are not limited to: diversions; critical area plantings; nutrient and pest management; and underground outlets

Flores says the three-year study is part of USDA's “Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food” initiative. He says the study will verify if high tunnels are effective in reducing pesticide usage, keeping vital nutrients in the soil, extending the growing season, increasing yields and providing other benefits to growers.

To apply for EQIP or to get more information about EQIP and other NRCS programs, contact your NRCS office at 660-646-5687 ext. 3. You can also get information about NRCS programs online at <http://www.mo.nrcs.usda.gov/programs>.



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