



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

# NRCS Financial & Technical Assistance Programs



Natural  
Resources  
Conservation  
Service

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# 5

## Steps to Assistance

How to Get Assistance from NRCS  
for Farms, Ranches and Forests



### Starting the conservation conversation with NRCS

- Are you new to farming?
- Do you farm and want to make improvements to the land that you own or lease?

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# STEP 1: Conservation Planning

**To get started with NRCS, we recommend you stop by your local NRCS field office or give us a call to schedule a farm visit. We'll discuss your vision for your land and walk the land with you. And ultimately create a conservation plan for you that serves as a roadmap to reaching your conservation goals.**

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## STEP 2: Applying for Assistance

**Once your conservation plan is in place, we can help you decide if financial assistance is available to address resource concerns on your farm.**

**We'll walk you through the application process to apply for financial assistance.**

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## STEP 3: Checking Eligibility

**As part of the application process, we'll check to see if need specific items to be eligible.**

- **Assigned Farm & Tract number**
- **Adjusted Gross Income (AGI)**
- **Compliance with Highly Erodible Lands and Wetlands (AD-1026)**
- **Determined Farm Operation Plan (902)**
- **Banking Account Information on file**

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## STEP 4: Ranking

- In state ranking pools are created to rank like applications to like.
- The ranking process is done through our business tool **CART** that bases scores on set algorithms and is site specific.
  - Existing site condition
  - Planned Conservation Practices
  - Environmental Benefits of Resource Concerns addressed.

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## STEP 5: Implementing

If your application is selected for funding, you'll sign a contract and receive cost share once the contract item is completed.

Along with your contract you may receive:

- Job sheets or implementation requirements that explain how to execute the practice.
- Blueprints tailored to the practice you may be constructing.
- Operation & Maintenance documents

***You will always receive customer service any time you need it!***

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## Financial Assistance Programs

- Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA)/Risk Management Agency (RMA)
- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
- Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

## Agricultural Conservation Easement Programs

- Agricultural Land Easements
- Wetland Reserve Easements

# Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA)

- AMA is available in only 16 states. State participation is determined by a historical low participation in Federal Crop Insurance Program.
- No payment limitation during the length of the Farm Bill however yearly payments are limited to \$50,000.
- Yearly limitation applies to AMA & RMA funds administered throughout the year to the participant.
- Delaware has tailored the AMA program to focus on high tunnels and associated practices.



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# Environmental Quality Incentives Program

- **NRCS' flagship program for helping producers apply conservation practices on their land**
- **Provides financial and technical assistance to address natural resource concerns**
- **Benefits include:**
  - Improving air, soil and water quality
  - Conserving water
  - Preventing soil erosion
  - Enhancing wildlife habitat
  - Mitigating impacts from climate change
- **NRCS accepts applications year-round. Application cut off deadlines are announced annually. March 15 is Delaware's second application deadline.**



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# Small Farm Conservation Practices

NRCS has adjusted cost share of some conservation practices to account for implementation on a smaller scale.

Example of practices with a small-scale option:

- Cover Crop
- High Tunnel
- Reduced Tillage/No Till
- Micro-Irrigation
- Raised Beds



## Other practices?



### **Irrigation Water Management Plan**

- Irrigation System Upgrades
- Irrigation motor conversion from diesel to electric
- Increasing to a more efficient diesel irrigation motor

Pollinator Habitat

Nutrient Management

Pest Management

No Till/Strip Till/Mulch Till

Cover Crop



# Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

- **Helps producers take their conservation activities to the next level by incorporating whole farm planning**
- **Producers receive payment for conservation already being done on the operation**
- **Additional payments for conservation activities incorporated into their operation.**
- **CSP contracts are for 5 years and has the option to renew.**
- **Minimum annual payment is \$4,000**



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# Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

- **Aids landowners and eligible entities with conserving, restoring and protecting wetlands, productive agricultural lands and grasslands**
- **Two types:**
  - Wetland Reserve Easements
  - Agricultural Land Easements



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# Contact Us

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## New Castle County:

2430 Old County Rd

Newark, DE 19702

- Call 302-832-3100 ext. 3

## Kent County:

519 S. Red Haven Lane, Suite 100

Dover, DE 19901

- Call 302-741-2600, ext. 3

## Sussex County:

21315 Berlin Rd,

Georgetown, DE 19947

- Call 302-856-3990, ext. 3

Online: [www.nrcs.usda.gov/delaware](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/delaware)

