



DICKINSON SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

SPIRIT LAKE, IOWA 51360 712-336-3782, EXT. 3

A Quality Environment

AUGUST 2008

Additional Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) Funds Available for New Practices and Flood Repair

The US Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Iowa has received an additional \$10.6 million in EQIP funds.

Most of the new EQIP funds, \$6.6 million will provide farmers financial assistance for establishing new conservation practices such as **grassed waterways, no-till farming, waste storage facilities, terracing, pest management, pasture management, tree planting, windbreaks and strip cropping.**

The remaining \$4 million will provide farmers financial assistance for repairing conservation practices damaged by heavy rainfall or flooding.

The EQIP signup also includes two new incentives:

New 2008 contracts are eligible for a summer construction incentive of \$200 per acre on cropland to help producers with timely application of practices. To be eligible, landowners must complete construction between June 15 and September 15, 2009. The incentive includes

planting a cover crop and it only includes the cropland needed to complete construction.

Producers who install biofilters to reduce odors from confined livestock operations will also receive an incentive. Eligible landowners will receive \$2.50 per animal unit (maximum of 1,500 animal units) for three years.

Signup for EQIP is continuous. See the enclosed cost list for Dickinson County practices.

Contact the NRCS office in Spirit Lake at 712-336-3782, Ext. 3, for more information. The initial cutoff for selecting applications for funding from this recent EQIP allocation will be August 1, 2008.

No-Till/Strip Till Incentive being offered to Producers in 6 northwest Iowa counties

The Division of Soil Conservation is offering a **\$50 per acre incentive** for producers to try a no-till/strip till practice in **Clay, Dickinson, Emmet, Kossuth, Palo Alto and Pocahontas** Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

**\$50 per acre payment, fully
payable the first year of the
contract**

**200 acres maximum per
application**

Limit of one application per

producer

Cut-off date for 2009

applications is April 15, 2009

Applicants will be required to

sign a

**maintenance/performance
agreement**

1. Three (3) year agreement

2. Must be no-till or strip-till

planted

3. Contact the field office after
planting for certification

4. Must be certified after
planting all three years

5. Must be planted on the same
acres all three (3) years

6. Applicants must attend an
annual meeting and field day

**Applicants can move the no-
till/strip-till acres one time
only with approval of the
District. A new three year
maintenance/performance
agreement with no
additional incentive is
required.**

**If the producer cannot complete
the contract or the no-
till/strip-till is not followed
for the full time period, a full
refund of all incentive money
will be required.**

Interested producers should contact the Dickinson SWCD at the USDA Service Center as soon as possible to sign-up for this no-till/strip till incentive payment as each District will have access to only \$33,333.

District Commissioners

Mark Ingwersen — Chair Chris Hoffman — Vice Chair
Scott Mitchell — Secretary, Treasurer
Curt Smith John Myhre

Assistant Commissioners

Orville Berg Earl Muilenburg Phyllis Nielsen
Keith Van Kleek

District Mission Statement

The Dickinson SWCD will serve its customers and the needs of the District's natural resources through education, promotion, and demonstration.

State Cost-Share Programs

Fall is a great time to review your needs for field and farmstead windbreaks, as well as waterways, sediment basins, and other structural practices.

The Iowa Department of Agriculture, Division of Soil Conservation offers State cost-share which provides **50% to 75% of actual cost** for several kinds of conservation practices depending on the practice.

These practices may include: **Waterways, terraces, sediment basins, grade stabilization structures, diversions, farmstead and field windbreaks.**

A **no-till, ridge-till or strip-till incentive** is offered on a one-time only, per producer basis, with a maximum of 80 acres at \$10 per acre.

You may sign up for State cost-share at any time at the SWCD/NRCS office at the USDA Service Center.

Clean Water Alliance Coordinator

John Wills, Clean Water Alliance Coordinator, is no stranger to improving water quality in the area.

Wills worked on the Iowa Great Lakes Clean Water Project from 1993 to 1999 and rejoined the effort to improve the Lakes as Clean Water Alliance Coordinator in 2008.

"My expectations for this project are rather large," said Wills. "All the indicators are here that the people within Dickinson County are ready to do good things for the water quality of their lakes."

Wills grew up and attended high school in Sibley. He holds an Associates Degree in Environmental Studies from Iowa Lakes Community College (1987), a Bachelors Degree in Biology from Northwestern College (1989) and just finished his Masters Degree in Political Science from the American Public University (2008). Before returning to Dickinson County, Wills taught biology, served in the US Army and worked for the Loess Hills Alliance.

Thanks to past efforts to improve the county's lakes, Wills believes they are some of the best in the state, but efforts are needed to keep it that way.

"Water quality never stays the same—it is always either getting better or worse," said Wills. "It is the choice of each person, the direction the water quality is going."

Low Interest Loan Programs

The Iowa Water Quality Loan Fund is a new source of low-cost financing available to landowners. This opportunity is available specifically to assist and encourage landowners to address non-point source pollution of Iowa streams and lakes.

All practices eligible for cost-share — IFIP, REAP and EQIP are eligible for a low interest loan. Some examples are: terraces, grade stabilization structures, water and sediment control basins, hoop buildings, manure storage structures and prescribed grazing.

Loan Terms:

Loans from \$5,000

Terms up to 10 years or 20 years for AFO facilities

Can fund up to 100% of actual costs

Applications accepted year-round

3% fixed for life of loan

Available through your bank as a linked deposit through the Iowa Finance Authority

Applications for loans are available at the SWCD office. Eligibility, design and costs are approved through the SWCD. Your local bank qualifies you for financing (loan re-payment and collateral).

March is Women's History Month

Upcoming conferences for farm women include:

Women Adding Value to Agriculture in Decorah, Iowa February 8 & 9

Gather with other rural women to network and learn how to add value to agriculture. Choose workshop sessions in farm marketing, value-added agriculture, and personal enrichment and be inspired by special speakers. The conference begins with a noon luncheon on Friday, February 8 and concludes the next day at 1 p.m. Twenty-two break-out sessions will be offered focusing on topics related to value-added agriculture, "on the farm," and personal development. Casual conversation and relaxation will follow the Friday evening dinner.

Come for both days, or register for a single day. Invite your neighbors, your co-workers, and your relatives to join you.

For more information, or to register for the conference: www.ucs.iastate.edu/mnet/wava/home.html

Boots to Heels at the Cass County Community Center in Atlantic, Iowa March 1

and

Women Around Ag in Clear Lake, Iowa March 28 & 29

More information will be coming, so check the following website:

www.extension.iastate.edu/winnebago/news/Women%2BAround%2BAg.html

Taking Charge of Your Farm's Future – A Toolkit for Ag Women Conference workbook is available

To receive a copy you must supply your name, address, phone and e-mail address to:
maryw@associationinsight.com

To order the workbook, select one of the following:

1. Download pdf: The download will be in a pdf format. After receipt of the required information, a password will be sent for the downloadable copy. Cost - Complimentary

2. Workbook to be shipped - Cost \$7.50 S&H

Make check payable to: Iowa Women in Ag

Send to: Iowa Women in Ag, 4536 114th St., Urbandale, IA 50322-5410 (Mailing Address)

3. Pick up at office - Cost - Complimentary

Iowa Soybean Association, 4554 114th St, Urbandale, IA (Physical Address)

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We encourage all landowners and operators to contact the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Department of Soil Conservation and Dickinson Soil and Water Conservation staff at 712-336-3782, Ext. 3, in the USDA Service Center in Spirit Lake to learn more about these and other programs.

Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)

Purpose: To develop and implement a restoration plan for wetlands that were previously altered for agricultural use.

Practices: Wetland restoration and wildlife habitat establishment.

Eligibility: Land that has been owned by the applicant for one year and that contains eligible soils that can be restored to wetland conditions.

Contract: Landowners may restore wetlands using permanent easements, 30-year easements or 10-year contracts. Permanent easements pay 100 percent of the difference between the fair market value of the land now and the fair market value of the property once the proposed easement is in place and 100 percent cost-share for restoration; 30-year easements pay 75 percent of the difference between the fair market value of the land now and the fair market value of the property once the proposed easement is in place and 75 percent cost-share for restoration; 10-year contracts pay 75 percent cost-share of restoration work only. Permanent or 30-year easements are conveyed with an easement document that is recorded at the county level. Ten-year contracts do not use recorded documents.

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)

Purpose: To develop or improve fish and wildlife habitat on privately owned land through the application of a conservation plan.

Practices: Seeding, tree and shrub plantings, fencing, instream structures, and prairie restoration.

Eligibility: Nearly all land is eligible, including agricultural and non-agricultural land, woodlots, pastures, and streambanks.

Contract: Usually 5-10 years to install and maintain habitat. Up to 75 percent of restoration costs, to a maximum of \$25,000. Other organizations may provide the remaining 25 percent cost share.

State Cost-Share

Purpose: To provide cost-share or incentives on permanent and management conservation practices to control erosion and reduce sediment.

Practices: SWCDs set priorities for practices to fund. Examples include terraces, waterways, and structures.

Eligibility: Any landowner who is a district cooperator and enters into a voluntary agreement with the district to install and maintain an approved conservation practice.

Contracts: Up to 50 percent cost-share and up to a 20-year maintenance agreement.

Note: DSC funds are administered through local SWCDs.

State Loan Program

Purpose: To provide no-interest loans to eligible landowners for constructing permanent soil conservation practices under a conservation plan.

Practices: SWCDs set priorities for practices to fund. Examples include terraces, waterways, and structures.

Eligibility: Landowners must be able to secure the loan, be capable of repaying the loan, and be a cooperator with the SWCD.

Contracts for conservation practices: Cooperators may borrow up to \$10,000 for a 10-year period and sign a 20-year maintenance agreement.

Contracts for livestock program: Minimum loan of \$10,000; lifespan not to exceed 20 years; plans must be approved by the DNR.

Note: DSC funds are administered through local SWCDs.

Local Water Protection Loan Program (low interest loans)

Purpose: To provide loans for permanent conservation practices to control soil, sediment, and nutrient runoff on agricultural land.

Eligibility: Loan applicant must be the landowner where practice will take place. Small manure management projects are allowed but concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) are not eligible.

Loan amount: From \$5,000 to \$50,000. May be used in conjunction with other state and federal grants and cost-share.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

Purpose: To provide technical and financial assistance to landowners to develop and implement conservation plans that address specific natural resource concerns.

Practices: Livestock manure management, grazing land management, soil erosion control, and water quality improvement practices are eligible for cost-share statewide. Assistance for other practices is available in selected priority areas.

Eligibility: Agricultural producers on agricultural land are eligible. Projects are selected based on environmental benefits per United States dollar expended.

Contract: 5-10 year contracts. Agricultural producers may be eligible for up to 75% cost-share, up to \$450,000 for all contracts for the length of the 2002 Farm Bill.

Grassland Reserve Program (GRP)

Purpose: To develop and implement a grassland resource management plan to help private landowners and operators restore and protect grassland, including rangeland and pastureland.

Practices: Grazing and haying management, prescribed burns, and fencing.

Eligibility: Privately owned lands, such as grasslands; land that contains forbs; or land located in an area historically dominated by grassland or forbs that could serve as wildlife habitat. Must be in a contiguous tract of 40 or more acres.

Contract: Permanent easements, 30-year easements or 10-, 15-, 20- or 30-year rental agreements. Permanent easements pay 100 percent and 30-year easements pay 30 percent of the difference between the fair market value of the land now and the grassland value of the property once the proposed easement is in place. The 10-, 15-, 20- and 30-year agreements pay a per-acre annual payment for the life of the agreement.

State Watershed Protection Practices Purpose:

Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) funds and Iowa Watershed Protection Program provide cost-share or incentives to address local water quality protection needs.

Practices: Each SWCD sets priorities for practices. Examples include tree plantings, windbreaks, land use conversion practices and traditional erosion control practices.

Eligibility: Landowners who are SWCD cooperators to install and maintain approved conservation practices under a conservation plan.

Contract: Up to 75% cost-share and up to a 20-year maintenance agreement.