



Providing leadership and assistance in the proper use and management of soil, water, and related natural resources in Steuben County.

The Conservator

Steuben County, Indiana Soil & Water Conservation District
1220 N 200 W, Suite L ~ Angola, IN 46703 ~ Phone: (260) 665-3211, ext. 3

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Indiana NRCS District Conservationists are Ready to Help Landowners

Farm bill program deadlines have been set for Indiana’s agricultural producers who want to improve natural resources and address concerns on their land. Jerry Raynor, USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) State Conservationist, announced that **December 18** will be the application deadline for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and **January 8** will be the application deadline for the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) in Indiana.

EQIP is a voluntary conservation program available for agricultural producers. Through EQIP, NRCS provides financial and technical assistance to install conservation practices that reduce soil erosion and sedimentation, improve soil health, improve water and air quality and create wildlife habitat. Popular EQIP practices include cover crops, nutrient management, forest stand improvement, prescribed grazing and water quality improvement practices. Also included in this sign up are several state and national initiatives that address specific concerns within geographic regions of the state. While these initiatives use EQIP funding, landowners that apply for funding in one of the initiatives will not compete against the general EQIP funding pool.

“EQIP helps agricultural producers in a manner that promotes agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible goals,” said Raynor. “Farmers can receive assistance to implement structural and management conservation practices that optimize environmental benefits on their working agricultural land while helping to increase their yields.”

The state and national initiatives include the following:

- **Historically Underserved Farmers:** This fund category is for applicants defined as socially disadvantaged, veteran, limited resource or beginning farmer.
- **National Organic Initiative:** NRCS provides assistance to help producers implement conservation measures in keeping with organic production. Producers who are certified organic, transitioning to organic or exempt from organic certification are eligible for this initiative.
- **National On-Farm Energy Initiative:** NRCS provides assistance to quantify how energy can be used more efficiently to reduce input costs, increase productivity and reduce air pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions. This initiative offers assistance for Ag Energy Management Plans (AgEMPs) and certain energy conservation practices.

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Indiana NRCS District Conservationists are Ready to Help Landowners

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- Working Lands for Wildlife Initiative – Monarch Butterfly: The Monarch Butterfly Habitat Development Project is a multi-state effort focused on increasing monarch habitat on private lands through plantings of milkweed and nectaring forbs as well as managing pesticide use in proximity to monarch habitat.
- Working Lands for Wildlife Initiative – Bobwhite Quail: The goal of this initiative is to convert tall fescue and other non-native forages to native grasses and forbs and develop prescribed grazing plans to address the habitat needs of bobwhite quail and associated grassland/shrub land species. This category is available statewide on land which overlaps one of the Indiana DNR C.O.R.R.I.D.O.R.S. priority areas.
- Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI): NRCS and partners work with producers and landowners to implement voluntary conservation practices that improve water quality, restore wetlands, enhance wildlife habitat and sustain agricultural profitability in the Great Lakes.
- Resource Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) projects: RCPP promotes coordination between NRCS and its partners to deliver conservation assistance to producers and landowners. NRCS provides assistance to producers through partnership agreements and through the Grasslands and Gamebirds (five focal

regions located strategically throughout Indiana).

- Western Lake Erie Basin Initiative (WLEB): NRCS and partners work with producers and landowners to implement voluntary conservation practices that improve water quality, restore wetlands, enhance wildlife habitat and sustain agricultural profitability in the Western Lake Erie basin.

CSP is an important farm bill conservation program that helps producers who are already practicing good stewardship to take their natural resource management to the next level. The program helps 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.

“Farmers and forest landowners who enroll in CSP are going the extra mile to conserve our Indiana resources,” Raynor said. “The actions they are taking on their land are making a more productive and sustainable operation over the long run.”

Producers interested in EQIP or CSP should submit a signed application to the local NRCS field office. Applications submitted by the program deadline will be evaluated for this round of funding. Applicants must meet minimum eligibility requirements for EQIP and CSP. NRCS staff will work with producers to determine eligibility and, assess and rank each application to compete for funding.

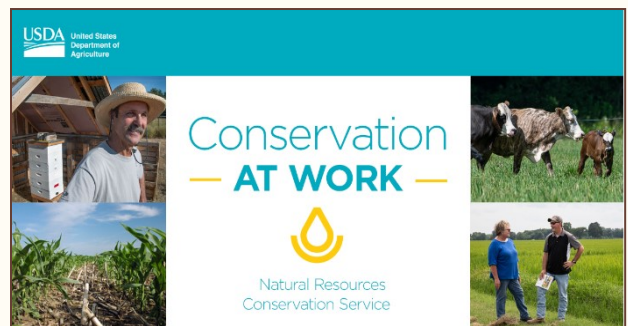
Conservation at Work Video Series

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) recently released a new video series called "Conservation At Work," which highlights farmers and ranchers who have benefited from implementing conservation practices on their operations.

The videos spotlight farmers, ranchers and forestland owners from across the U.S., who tell their conservation stories and how their practices have helped them protect and improve resources, while saving time and money.

Currently, there are 30 practices featured from across the nation, with more in development. Examples include: cover crops; forage and biomass planting; forest stand improvement; grassed waterway; nutrient management; prescribed grazing; tree/shrub establishment; waste storage facilities; etc. Want to explore different types of conservation? Links to these videos are provided at the NRCS website:

<https://www.farmers.gov/conserv/conservation-at-work>



2020 Affiliate Members

Bronze Level

Carper Farm Supply
 Caruso’s Restaurant
 Bill & Diana Clingan
 Daft Erosion Control LLC
 Hoham Feed and Seed
 Deloris Howarth
 Kenn-Feld Group, LLC
 Niann Lautzenhiser
 Erik & Laura Sorensen
 Stroh Farm Supply

Silver Level

Booth Farms
 City of Angola MS4

Clear Lake Township Land Conservancy
 Tom & Marilyn DeWeese
 Edon Farmers Co-Op
 Steve & Pauline Elett
 Franklin Paul Group, LLC
 Kevin Northup Excavating
 Peter Mountz
 Sandhill Environmental Services LLC
 John Williamson

Gold Level

Aquatic Enhancement & Survey, Inc.
 S & P Earthwork, Inc.

Platinum Level

Cameron Memorial Community Hospital
 Dailey Farms
 Farm Credit Mid-America
 Lake George Conservancy, Inc.
 Sheets LP Gas, L.P.
 Steuben County Lakes Council
 Stoy Farms
 Tom Green Engineering
 The Wilson Farm in Memory of Loyal Wilson
 Travis Wilson
 Tom Wilson

**Thank You
 For
 Your
 Support!**



Farm Service Agency Updates

Please call the office, (260-665-3211, ext. 2) for more details.

1. **Small Grains Certification Deadline:** Producers who have fall-seeded **wheat, rye, or other small grains** for harvest or cover crops need to certify this acreage in our office by **December 15, 2020**.
 * Michigan has a November 15, 2020 deadline, so please keep this in mind if you farm any Michigan ground.
2. **LAST CHANCE - The 2nd round of the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP 2):** The deadline to apply for this program is December 11, 2020. CFAP 2 provides direct relief to producers who faced price declines and additional marketing costs due to COVID-19. A range of commodities are eligible for CFAP, including cattle, milk, hogs, corn, and soybeans. Please let us know if you haven’t already applied for this program and have crops (or a share of your operator’s crops) or livestock.
3. **Dairy Margin Coverage Program (DMC):** If you are a dairy producer and would like to purchase and enroll in this Dairy insurance program, please let us know. Deadline to enroll is December 11th.
4. **Marketing Assistance Loans (MAL):** These low-interest loans provide interim financing to producers so that commodities can be stored after harvest when market prices are typically low, then be sold later when price conditions are more favorable. **Corn, Soybean and Wheat loans are available now** – See us for details if you would like to apply.
5. **County Committee Elections:** Ballots for our upcoming election were mailed November 2nd to eligible voters in LAA 3 (Salem, Steuben, Otsego, and Richland Townships). We have two candidates running for this position – Chuck Howard and Ginger Peckhart. Make sure to cast your vote by December 7, 2020.
6. **ARC/PLC Signup:** Agricultural producers can now make elections and enroll in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for the 2021 crop year. The signup period opened Tuesday, Oct. 13. These key U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) safety-net programs help producers weather fluctuations in either revenue or price for certain crops, and more than \$5 billion in payments are in the process of going out to producers who signed up for the 2019 crop year. Enrollment closes March 15, 2021.



Steuben County Soil & Water Conservation District

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Providing Leadership and Assistance in the Proper Use and Management of Soil, Water, and Related Natural Resources in Steuben County.

Please help us **go green** by subscribing to the newsletter via **e-mail**. Visit our website and click on the Newsletter tab, or call the office to change your subscription to *The Conservator* at any time.

All programs and activities of the Steuben County Soil and Water Conservation District and its Partnership Agencies are offered on a non-discriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program.

Upcoming Events

November 26 - 27 th	County Offices Closed Thanksgiving Holiday
December 5 th	Steuben County Lakes Council Meeting 8:30 AM at the First Congregational United Church of Christ in Angola
December 9 th	Steuben County SWCD Board Meeting 5:00 PM @ Steuben Co. Community Center
December 24 - 25 th	County Offices Closed Christmas Holiday
January 1 st	County Offices Closed New Years Day Holiday
January 13 th	Steuben County SWCD Board Meeting 5:00 PM @ Steuben Co. Community Center
November - February	Lake Michigan Basin Webinar Series 1 st & 3 rd Wednesdays of the Month 1:00 to 2:00 PM (CT) / 2:00 to 3:00 PM (ET) Additional Details at: https://www.in.gov/idem/lakemichigan/2679.htm

***For more events and updates please check our website**
Times and places of meetings subject to change.*

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Indiana State Department of Agriculture Staff:

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