



What is the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)?

EQIP is a voluntary conservation program that helps farmers and owners of agricultural land, including forest landowners, improve natural resources.



Seasonal High Tunnels



Seasonal High Tunnels

- Maximum area size restrictions have been removed, however, there is a \$10,000 cost cap for this practice.
- To receive EQIP cost-share assistance for irrigation, the land has to be irrigated 2 of the past 5 years.
- The practice applies to existing cultivated cropland.
- Crops must be grown in the natural soil. No containers allowed.
- Systems must be built from pre-manufactured kits.
- Tunnel frame must be made of metal, wood, or durable plastic and must be at least 6-ft. in height.



Photo to the Left: High Tunnel showing no irrigation system installed. Producer using garden hose and sprinkler to help establish irrigation history



Photo to the Right: High Tunnel with side curtain raised to help with ventilation and also allows pollinators to enter

EQIP Irrigation Financial Assistance

Irrigation assistance under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is only available to producers that are **converting EXISTING systems to a more EFFICIENT irrigation method and requires Irrigation History 2 out of the last 5 years.**

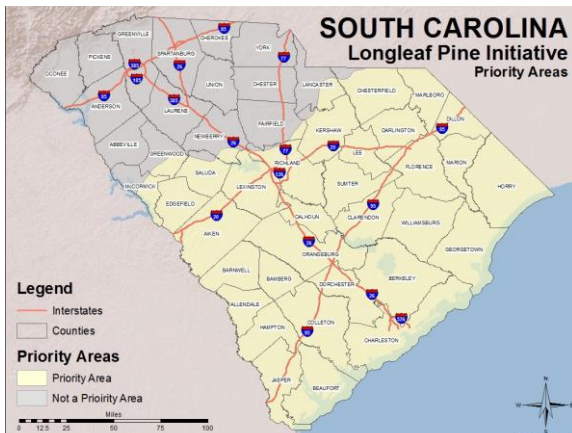


Livestock Systems

Pasture Planting, Fencing, Watering
Facilities, Heavy Use Areas and
Livestock Water Wells



Longleaf Pine



What are the eligibility requirements for NRCS Programs?

PRODUCER ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

1. Must be an individual or legal entity
2. Must have Signature Authority (for legal entity)
3. Owner or actively engaged in the management of the agricultural or forestry operation being enrolled. Documented by either of the following:
 - a. Records from FSA to identify owner or operator
 - b. Production of \$1,000 in Ag products produced, sold or both. Woodland owners are EXEMPT from this requirement.

What are the eligibility requirements for NRCS Programs?

4. Have control of the land
5. Be in compliance with the provisions for protecting the interests of tenants and sharecroppers
6. Be in compliance with HEL and wetland provisions
7. Be within the appropriate Farm Bill payment limitations (\$450,000 from the period of FY2014 to FY2018)

What are the eligibility requirements for NRCS Programs?

8. Meet Average Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) requirements of \$900,000
9. Meet Special Emphasis Applicant criteria if self-certifying as such to receive the 90% payment rate (New/Beginning Farmer, Limited Resource Producer, Socially Disadvantaged Farmer, or Veteran Farmer)
10. Meet requirements for the Organic Initiative (if applicable)

Special Emphasis Applicants?

Participants meeting one of the four categories of "special emphasis applicants" are eligible for the 90% payment rate. Those are:

1. **New/Beginning Farmer** – must meet BOTH
 - a. Not operated for more than 10 consecutive years
 - b. Must provide the day-to-day operations (labor)

Special Emphasis Applicants?

4. **Veteran Farmer** – a farmer who has served in the Armed Forces and

has not operated a farm; or
has operated a farm for not more than 10 years.

What are the eligibility requirements for NRCS Programs?

LAND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

1. Must be agricultural land
2. Must be privately owned land – Documented by deed or lease.
3. Have permission of landowner to install structural practice if leased land
4. Have an identified resource concern
5. Have irrigation history 2 out of the last 5 years (if applying for irrigation)

Special Emphasis Applicants?

2. **Socially Disadvantaged** – includes all minority participants
3. **Limited Resource Farmer** – must meet BOTH
 - a. Gross farm sales of not more than the current indexed value in EACH of the previous 2 years
 - b. Total household income AT or BELOW the national poverty level for a family of four

For more information on this designation please go to: <http://www.lfctool.sc.egov.usda.gov>

What are the steps to financial assistance through NRCS?





For more information, visit
www.sc.nrcs.usda.gov or
call your local NRCS
District Conservationist

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