

# Conservation Stewardship Program



## for Rice Producers

**Have you ever looked across your land and thought about some operational management goals you would like to take to the next level? Maybe we can help.**

No one knows more about your land than you do, and no one knows more about conservation than we do. Together we can develop a plan tailored to your operation and your goals to help you increase productivity and protect the value of your land.

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) offers an opportunity for rice producers to enhance their agricultural operations while adopting conservation activities that can reduce energy use, improve soil health,

and improve water quality. CSP can help you plan and implement conservation practices and enhancements that address natural resource concerns on your operation.

### What's new?

Rice producers continue to benefit from all that CSP has to offer. There are a number of enhancements applicable to rice production. Examples of enhancement options available to rice producers are irrigation water management activities to enhance air quality, buffers to enhance water quality and tillage management activities.

The new CSP provides adaptive management options to better respond to market and weather conditions, allowing participants to choose enhancements, or bundles of enhancements, that best fit their unique circumstances.

### Is CSP for you?

CSP helps you build on your existing conservation efforts while strengthening your operation. Whether you are looking to reduce concentration of nutrients, apply pesticides with precision or develop wildlife habitat, we can custom design a CSP plan to help you meet those goals. We can help you with drainage water management, manage your irrigation system, or increase riparian filter strips to benefit wildlife. If you are already taking steps to improve the condition of the land, chances are CSP can help you find new ways to meet your goals. CSP contracts are for five years, with the option to renew.

### Types of Assistance

NRCS provides free technical assistance to all agricultural producers. To participate in CSP and receive financial assistance, producers must control or own the land and be in compliance with highly erodible land and wetland conservation requirements, and have current farm records with USDA Farm Service Agency. Learn more at [www.nrcs.usda.gov/farmbill](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/farmbill).

### Where can I get more info?

To learn more about CSP opportunities, rice producers should contact their local USDA service center and set up an appointment with NRCS staff. A [Local Service Center Directory](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov) is available online at [www.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov), then click "Contact Us." You can also visit our CSP page online at [www.nrcs.usda.gov/CSP](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/CSP).



**Natural  
Resources  
Conservation  
Service**

[nrcs.usda.gov](http://nrcs.usda.gov)



CSP Enhancements for Rice Producers

(This is not an exhaustive list.)

Energy & Water Efficiency	Nutrient & Pest Management	Crops, Soil & Water	Wildlife
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No till to Reduce Energy Use</li> <li>• Reduced tillage to Reduce Energy Use</li> <li>• Install Variable Frequency Drive on Pumps</li> <li>• Pumping Plant Evaluation to Determine Potential for Variable Frequency Drive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Precision Pesticide Application</li> <li>• Increase Riparian Herbaceous Cover for Nutrient Reduction</li> <li>• Increase Riparian Forest Buffer Width for Nutrient Reduction</li> <li>• Extend Existing Filter Strips to Reduce Excess Nutrients, Chemicals and Sediment</li> <li>• Plant Cover Crops to Suppress Weeds and Break Pest Cycles</li> <li>• Improve Nutrient Uptake Efficiency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irrigation Water Management Relating to Weather</li> <li>• Irrigation Water Management Relating to Soil Moisture</li> <li>• Irrigation Pumping Plant Evaluation Enhancement</li> <li>• Irrigation System Automation</li> <li>• Remote Monitoring of Irrigation Pumping Plant Operation</li> <li>• Cover Crops to Improve Soil Health, Organic Matter or Water Quality</li> <li>• Utilize Precision Ag Technologies to Reduce Nutrient Losses to Surface Water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renovate Shallow Water Habitat for Wildlife</li> <li>• Extend Periods of Soil Saturation or Shallow Ponding for Wildlife</li> <li>• Increase Riparian Filter Strips to Enhance Wildlife Habitat</li> <li>• Leave Standing Grain Crops Unharvested to Benefit Wildlife</li> <li>• Harvest Crops Using Methods that Allow Desired Species to Flush or Escape</li> <li>• Establish Conservation Cover for Pollinator and/or Beneficial Insect Habitat</li> </ul>

# FAQ

## frequently asked questions

**How can I find out if I am eligible?**

The best way to determine eligibility is to contact your [local field office](#). You must meet Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) requirements and have a Farm Tract Number with FSA. Land already enrolled in some USDA Farm Bill programs, such as CRP and some easement programs, may not be eligible.

**Is there a minimum number of acres needed to be enrolled?**

No, but entire operation must be enrolled.

**Is there a minimum contract payment?**

Yes, \$1,500 annually.

**What are “resource concerns?”**

NRCS conservation specialists conduct resource inventories on agricultural land to evaluate natural resources including soil, water, air, plant, and animal resource bases to determine their condition. If there

is a cause or threat to that resource, that can result in what we refer to as a resource concern. Examples of resource concerns are erosion, degraded water quality, and plant health.

**What are “enhancements?”**

Enhancements are management activities that go above and beyond the minimum practice requirements helping the producer achieve a higher level of conservation.

**What are “bundles?”**

Bundles are suites of conservation enhancements designed to address

multiple resource concerns. Bundle options are offered at a higher payment rate.

**Do I have options to pick the enhancements that are best suited for my operation?**

Yes. The variety of CSP practices that are offered give you a lot of freedom to select enhancements that help you meet your management goals.

