



**Natural Resources Conservation Service**

675 U.S. Courthouse

801 Broadway

Nashville, TN 37205

Contact: Katherine K. Burse, 615-277-2533

Web: <http://www.tn.nrcs.usda.gov>

# NEWS RELEASE

## **NRCS Encourages Producers in Northwest Tennessee to Apply for RCPP Funding to Help Protect Water Quality Sign-up Deadline is January 20, 2017**

**NASHVILLE, December 1, 2016** – Eligible farmers in parts of Obion, Weakley, Henry, Lake, Dyer, Gibson, and Lauderdale are encouraged to apply for funding to help them protect water quality in the North Fork Obion River Watershed and ultimately, the Gulf of Mexico. The deadline to apply is January 20, 2017.

NRCS will fund \$400,000 through the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) and includes a five-year agreement—signed on May 21, 2015—between University of Tennessee (UT) Extension and NRCS.

*“RCPP funding is available to assist eligible farmers in adopting precision nutrient management techniques, thereby reducing nutrient runoff in the Mississippi River Basin,”* said Kevin Brown, Tennessee NRCS State Conservationist. *“Precision application of fertilizers and other advanced nutrient management practices play an integral role in soil health management.”*

Eligible farmers with land in production in parts of Obion, Weakley, Henry, Lake, Dyer, Gibson and Lauderdale counties can participate in RCPP in 2017. Interested parties in any of these Northwest Tennessee counties should sign up at their local USDA Service Center.

The NRCS conservation practice, nutrient management, will be implemented under RCPP through Environmental Quality Incentives Program contracting. Cover crops for soil health will also be an applicable practice. Financial and technical assistance will be provided to farmers who are willing or are currently implementing some form of precision agriculture, specifically application of fertilizers using variable rate technology, or VRT. Also, applicants must have yield-monitoring capabilities.

Applications for the program are accepted year around with the **first application deadline for FY 2017 funding being January 20, 2017**. Additional applications will continued to be accepted and funded throughout the year as funds are available.

RCPP is a voluntary program that promotes coordination between NRCS and its partners to deliver conservation assistance to producers and landowners through partnership agreements, program contracts, or easement agreements.

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Jamie Carpenter, Tennessee NRCS Assistant State Conservationist for Programs, and Lori Duncan, UT Extension Row Crop Sustainability Specialist, will be managing the project. Contact Duncan at 865-974-7111 or Carpenter at 615-277-2576, for more information.

For more information on Tennessee RCPP projects, farmers can visit the [Tennessee NRCS website](#) or for National RCPP projects, the [National RCPP website](#).

USDA NRCS helps America's farmers and ranchers conserve the Nation's soil, water, air and other natural resources. All programs are voluntary and offer science-based solutions that benefit both the landowner and the environment.

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**“Voluntary Conservation Works!”**