

## *Ranking Tool Summary* for FY2014 - Socially Disadvantaged (Released 01/08/2014 )

### Description:

This ranking tool and fund code will be used for all 2014 EQIP Socially Disadvantaged applications statewide in Connecticut. The scores will be used for selecting applications for contract development in 2014. The scores this ranking tool calculates will be used to evaluate and rank applications

### Land Uses:

Associated Agriculture Land, Crop, Farmstead, Forest, Pasture

### National Priorities:

Scoring Multiplier: 1.000

Scoring Ranges and Results Text:

High: 250 - 145	Medium: 144 - 75	Low: 74 - 0
This application ranks in the High range by meeting a significant number of the National EQIP priorities	This application ranks in the Medium range for meeting a beneficial number of the National EQIP priorities	This application ranks in the Low range for meeting only a few or none of the National EQIP priorities

### Questions:

Number	Question	Points
1	a. Is the program application to support the development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP)? If answer is "Yes", do not answer any other national level questions. If answer is "No", proceed with evaluation to address the remaining questions in this section.	250
2	a. Meet regulatory requirements relating to animal feeding operations, or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?	15
2	b. Reduce sediment, nutrients or pesticides from agricultural operations located within a field that adjoins a designated "impaired water body" (TMDL, 303d, etc.)?	15
2	c. Reduce sediment, nutrients or pesticides from agricultural operations located within a field that adjoins a "non-impaired water body"?	5
3	a. Decrease aquifer overdraft?	15
3	b. Conserve water from irrigation system improvements and saved water will be available for other beneficial uses?	10
3	c. Conserve water in an area where the applicant participates in a geographically established or watershed-wide project?	5
4	a. Meet on-farm regulatory requirements relating to air quality or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?	15
4	b. Reduce on-farm generated green house gases such as CO <sub>2</sub> (Carbon Dioxide), CH <sub>4</sub> (Methane), and N <sub>2</sub> O (Nitrous Oxide)?	15
4	c. Increase on-farm carbon sequestration?	5
5	a. Reduce erosion to tolerable limits (Soil "T")?	15
5	b. Improve soil tilth, organic matter, structure, health, etc.?	5
6	a. Benefit on-farm habitat associated with threatened and endangered, at-risk, candidate, or species of concern as identified in a State wildlife plan?	15
6	b. Help retain wildlife and plant habitat on land exiting the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)?	10
7	a. Help manage or control noxious or invasive plant species on non-cropland?	10
7	b. Increase, or improve habitat to benefit pollinator or other targeted wildlife species?	10
7	c. Properly dispose of livestock carcasses?	5
7	d. Are identified in an Integrated Pest Management plan?	10
7	e. Are identified in a Nutrient Management plan?	10

Connecticut NRCS 2014 Ranking Tool: Socially Disadvantaged Producer

7	f. Apply principles of adaptive nutrient management?	5
8	a. Reduce energy consumption on the agricultural operation?	15
8	b. Increase on-farm energy efficiency with practices and improvements identified in an approved energy audit equivalent to criteria required in Ag EMP?	10
8	c. Assist in implementing energy conservation measures that also reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollutants?	10
9	a. Implementation of all conservation practices scheduled in the contract on the CPA-1155 within three years of date of obligation?	10
9	b. Improvement of existing conservation practices or conservation systems already in place at the time the application is accepted?	5
9	c. Implementation of practice(s) which will complete an existing conservation system or suite of practices?	5
Total Points		500

**State Issues:**

Scoring Multiplier: 2.160

Scoring Ranges and Results Text:

High: 400 - 250	Medium: 249 - 110	Low: 109 - 0
This application ranks in the High range for meeting a significant number of Connecticut state level EQIP priorities	This application ranks in the Medium range for meeting a beneficial number of Connecticut state level EQIP priorities	This application ranks in the Low range for meeting only a few of Connecticut state level EQIP priorities

Questions:

Sub-heading Number	Question Number	Question	Points
1		Cropland Questions - Answer only if applicable. Choose either a.) or b.) - NOT Both	
	1	a. Is irrigation water use reduction at 35% or greater as determined by CT NRCS?	20
	1	b. Is irrigation water use reduction less than 35%, but more than 20% as determined by CT NRCS?	10
	1	c. Will the producer develop and implement an IPM plan for this area?	5
	1	d. Will multi-species cover crops or crop rotation of more than two families be used as part of the cropping system?	10
	1	e. Will crops be planted into a high surface residue such as an organic mulch or no-till/low-till system?	10
	1	f. Is the producer actively engaged in a Nutrient Management Plan, in accordance with USDA NRCS standards?	10
	1	g. Does an identified resource concern of sheet and rill erosion exist and are contracted practices expected to reduce the soil loss from above "T" to "T" or below according to RUSLE2?	10
2		Forestland/ Wildlife Questions - Answer only if applicable	
	2	a. Is the contract based on a forest management plan which includes a goal to adjust the base line stocking rate to the correct level through practices of either thinning or planting?	10
	2	b. Does this contract address ALL invasive species identified in the participant's forest management plan where the plan identifies the potential for successful control and/or containment?	5
	2	c. Does the contract include practices to promote native species - either planting or natural regeneration?	10

Connecticut NRCS 2014 Ranking Tool: Socially Disadvantaged Producer

	2	d. Will the practices in this contract benefit aquatic wildlife habitats?	10
	2	e. Will the intended practice(s) provide direct benefits to wildlife and habitats through implementation of practices that include mast release, tree and shrub plantings, or encouragement of early successional habitats?	15
	2	f. Will the contract address wildlife habitat concerns as the primary objective. This will be reflected in an increase in the forest land Wildlife Habitat Suitability Index.	5
	2	g. Will the practices in this contract enhance or provide wildlife corridors by linking existing habitat patches across owned or adjacent forestland?	5
3		Pasture/Hayland Questions - Answer only if applicable Choose either b) or c) -- Not Both. Choose either d) or e) -- Not Both	
	3	a. Will the producer implement a prescribed grazing plan in accordance with the requirements of CT NRCS 528, Prescribed Grazing?	15
	3	b. Are fences planned in this contract at least 35 feet from wetlands and water?	10
	3	c. Are fences planned in this contract at less than 35 feet but at least 10 feet from wetlands and water?	5
	3	d. Is grazing likely to provide 100% of feed during the growing season?	10
	3	e. Is grazing likely to provide between 75 - 99% of feed during the growing season?	5
	3	f. Does the pasture(s) have both legumes and grass species existing or planned?	5
	3	g. Does the pasture(s) have both warm and cool season grasses existing or planned?	5
	3	h. Does the pasture system make use of any annual forages?	5
	3	i. Will more than 4 different species of perennial forage be planted?	5
	3	j. Will cropland be seeded to permanent perennial forage?	5
		Maximum Points: 185 Total Points	205

**Local Issues:**

Scoring Multiplier: 1.610

Scoring Ranges and Results Text:

High: 250 - 145	Medium: 144 - 75	Low: 74 - 0
This application ranks in the High range for meeting a significant number of the Local criteria that consider ecology and specific resource concerns.	This application ranks in the Medium range for meeting a moderate number of the Local criteria that consider ecology and specific resource concerns.	This application ranks in the Low range for meeting only a few or none of the Local criteria that consider ecology and specific resource concerns.

**Questions:**

Sub-heading Number	Question Number	Question	Points
1		Location	
	1	a. Is this an application for practices to address water quality at a confined livestock feeding operation that is located in a twelve (12) digit Hydrologic Unit code (HUC) watershed of a 303(d) listed stream?	25
	1	b. Is this application located in a Public Water Supply Watershed or designated Aquifer Protection Area AND does it contain practices that address water quality?	40
	1	c. Does the contract application involves land that has been permanently protected through federal, state, local government programs or private land trusts?	15
2		Degree of Cooperation by Producer	

Connecticut NRCS 2014 Ranking Tool: Socially Disadvantaged Producer

	2	a. Have other Federal, State, local, or non governmental organization financial resources been committed to this project?	10
	2	b. If the applicant has an existing EQIP contract, has it been, and is it now, on schedule and in full compliance?	10
	2	c. Did the applicant successfully complete any past contract(s) in full compliance?	5
	2	Is this the applicant's first EQIP application?	5
3		Magnitude of Expected Benefits	
	3	a. Does the contract application have energy as a secondary resource concern?	15
	3	b. Does the contract application involve conservation of surface and/or groundwater (i.e. irrigation water management)	15
	3	c. Will the practices in this contract directly benefit threatened or endangered species according to results obtained from the CT-DEEP NDDDB (Natural Diversity Database)?	10
	3	d. Has the producer completed, or is currently enrolled in, an organic certification program recognized by USDA?	10
		Maximum Points: 155 Total Points	160