

# USDA Producer Eligibility

The applicant must be determined as an “eligible producer” by the USDA-Farm Service Agency (FSA) and must meet the following criteria:

- Be an agricultural producer that is engaged in livestock or agricultural production as defined,
- Have an interest in the farming operation associated with the land being offered for enrollment,
- Have control of the land for the term of the proposed contract,
- Be in compliance with the provisions for protecting the interests of tenants and sharecroppers, including the provisions for sharing EQIP payments on a fair and equitable basis,
- Be in compliance with the highly erodible land and wetland conservation compliance provisions,
- Be within appropriate payment limitation requirements,
- Be in compliance with AGI requirements, and If applicable, the producer should provide Direct Deposit Information.

For more information on programs available through NRCS, please contact your local USDA Service Center. See Index below.

Service Center	County	Phone	Service Center	County	Phone
<b>Appling County</b>	Appling	(912) 367-4368	<b>Jefferson County</b>	Jefferson, Glascock, Warren	(478) 625-7771
	Bacon	(912) 632-4832		Warren, McDuffie	(706) 595-1339
	Jeff Davis	(912) 375-3671	<b>Lamar County</b>	Lamar, Upson	(770) 358-3223
<b>Berrien County</b>	Berrien, Clinch, Cook, Echols	(229) 686-2363		Pike	(770) 567-3599
	Lanier	(229) 482-3440		Monroe	(478) 994-6548
	Lowndes	(229) 242-0841	<b>Laurens County</b>	Laurens, Wilkinson	(478) 275-0425
<b>Brooks County</b>	Brooks	(229) 263-4909	<b>Liberty County</b>	Chatham, Bryan	(912) 564-2207
	Thomas	(229) 228-0459		Liberty, McIntosh, Long	(912) 876-8141
<b>Bulloch County</b>	Candler, Tattnall	(912) 685-5255	<b>Marion County</b>	Marion	(229) 649-3131
	Bulloch, Evans	(912) 871-2605		Chattahoochee	(706) 989-2007
<b>Carroll County</b>	Carroll, Haralson, Heard	(770) 832-8942		Muscogee	(706) 322-1112
<b>Cobb County</b>	Cobb, Douglas, Fulton, Paulding	(770) 792-0647		Harris	(706) 628-5313
<b>Coffee County</b>	Coffee	(912) 384-4811		Talbot	(706) 665-8535
	Telfair	(229) 868-6164	<b>Montgomery County</b>	Montgomery, Treutlen	(912) 583-4432
<b>Colquitt County</b>	Colquitt	(229) 985-5399		Wheeler	(912) 568-7331
	Worth	(229) 776-4488	<b>Morgan County</b>	Morgan, Jasper, Jones	(706) 342-1315
<b>Coweta County</b>	Coweta, Troup, Meriwether	(770) 251-4283		Newton	(770) 786-4236
<b>Crisp County</b>	Crisp	(229) 273-4148	<b>Peach County</b>	Peach, Bibb, Crawford	(478) 956-6490
	Turner	(229) 567-3994		Taylor	(478) 862-3312
	Wilcox	(229) 365-7926	<b>Randolph County</b>	Randolph, Oultman	(229) 732-6211
	Dooly	(229) 268-9106		Clay	(229) 768-2334
<b>Decatur County</b>	Decatur	(229) 246-8282	<b>Richmond County</b>	Burke	(706) 554-2109
	Seminole	(229) 524-5450		Jenkins	(478) 982-4058
	Grady	(229) 377-6283		Richmond, Columbia	(706) 724-2247
<b>Dodge County</b>	Dodge, Bleckley, Twiggs	(478) 374-2521	<b>Screven County</b>	Screven	(912) 564-2207
<b>Dougherty County</b>	Baker	(229) 734-5823		Effingham	(912) 754-3812
	Dougherty	(229) 430-8509	<b>Stephens County</b>	Stephens	(706) 886-8223
	Mitchell	(229) 336-1451		Habersham	(706) 754-2772
<b>Early County</b>	Calhoun	(229) 849-3900		White	(706) 865-2912
	Early	(229) 723-3825	<b>Sumter County</b>	Schley	(229) 937-5302
	Miller	(229) 758-2496		Stewart	(229) 838-4592
<b>Emanuel County</b>	Emanuel	(478) 237-8037		Sumter	(229) 924-9324
	Toombs	(912) 526-6154		Webster	(229) 828-2015
<b>Floyd County</b>	Floyd, Chattooga, Polk	(706) 291-5651	<b>Terrell County</b>	Terrell	(229) 995-5811
<b>Glynn County</b>	Brantley	(912) 462-5637		Lee	(229) 759-6035
	Camden, Glynn	(912) 265-8043	<b>Tift County</b>	Tift	(229) 382-4776
	Wayne	(912) 427-2502		Ben Hill	(229) 423-2041
<b>Gordon County</b>	Gordon	(706) 629-2582		Irwin	(229) 468-5936
	Bartow	(770) 387-5189	<b>Union County</b>	Union, Towns	(706) 745-2794
	Pickens	(706) 692-2497		Fannin	(706) 632-5636
	Cherokee	(770) 479-0517		Gilmer	(706) 635-4416
<b>Greene County</b>	Greene, Taliaferro, Hancock	(706) 453-7021		Rabun	(706) 782-3319
	Baldwin	(478) 445-5766	<b>Walker County</b>	Catoosa	(706) 935-5263
	Putnam	(706) 485-2291		Dade	(706) 657-4174
<b>Gwinnett County</b>	Gwinnett, DeKalb, Rockdale	(770) 963-9288		Whitfield	(706) 278-7906
<b>Hall County</b>	Hall	(770) 536-6981		Walker, Murray	(706) 638-2207
	Dawson	(706) 265-2374	<b>Walton County</b>	Walton	(770) 267-1359
	Lumpkin	(706) 864-2291		Barrow	(770) 307-3030
	Forsyth	(770) 781-2158		Clarke	(770) 267-1359
<b>Hart County</b>	Hart	(706) 376-5451		Oconee	(706) 769-3990
	Franklin	(706) 384-3855	<b>Ware County</b>	Ware, Charlton	(912) 285-5975
	Elbert	(706) 283-3021		Atkinson	(912) 422-3492
<b>Henry County</b>	Henry, Clayton, Butts Fayette, Spalding	(770) 957-5705		Pierce	(912) 449-6273
<b>Houston County</b>	Houston	(478) 987-2280	<b>Washington County</b>	Johnson	(478) 864-2810
	Pulaski	(478) 783-1391		Washington	(478) 552-6073
	Macon	(478) 472-6561	<b>Wilkes County</b>	Wilkes, Lincoln, Oglethorpe	(706) 678-2630
<b>Jackson County</b>	Jackson, Banks, Madison	(706) 335-7145			



McDonough, Georgia  
May 2008

## Environmental Quality Incentives Program

### EQIP

### Small Scale and Limited Resource Farmer Assistance



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## What is EQIP

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a voluntary program that provides assistance to farmers interested in improving the soil, water, air, and related natural resources on their land. Through EQIP, the USDA- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides technical assistance as well as cost incentives to assist farmers in addressing resource concerns that relate to soil erosion, soil quality, water quality, water conservation, wildlife habitat and forestry.

Farmers approved for EQIP can install set conservation practices on agricultural land and receive financial and technical assistance. Along with input from the farmer, NRCS will develop a conservation plan, on the acreage affected by their EQIP practices. All practices must meet NRCS technical standards and specifications.

### How Does EQIP Work

1. Eligible producers sign-up for assistance to address one or more of Georgia's Resource Concerns:
  - **Water Quantity** (water management and irrigation),
  - **Grazing Land Management**,
  - **Cropland Erosion**,
  - **Forestry/Woodland Management**
  - **Water Quality** (nutrient and pest management)
2. NRCS will review each application. A field visit will be made to assess the needs listed on the application which is only a request for assistance.
3. Each application is ranked with higher priority given to applications with the most environmental benefit using a statewide Environmental Benefits Index (EBI) ranking worksheet.
4. Producers with the highest EBI will be approved.
5. Producers will be notified of approval status.
6. If approved, the producer is responsible for getting the practices installed according to NRCS Practice Standards and Specifications.
7. All payments are reimbursable. Payment will be made after the practice has been installed and certified by NRCS or a Technical Service Provider (TSP).

## Small Scale and Limited Resource Farmer Assistance

The purpose of the Small Scale and Limited Resource Farmer assistance is to increase technical assistance and program participation in all NRCS programs through improved outreach efforts to Small Scale and Limited Resource farmers. This assistance is designed to assist those individuals who have historically not participated in or never ranked high enough to receive financial assistance through regular EQIP. Through this outreach initiative, the NRCS will help break potential barriers that might exist and limit participation in USDA programs.



### Who is considered Small Scale or Limited Resource

#### A Small Scale Producer

##### Qualifies for 75% Payment-Incentive, if the following is met:

- A person who owns/operates a total of 150 acres or less
- A person who own 40 acres of woodland or less
- A person with a total adjusted gross income of less than \$50,000 for the family
- Producer must complete Self-Certification Form

#### A Limited Resource Producer

##### Qualifies for 90% Payment-Incentive, if the following is met:

- A person with gross farm sales not more than \$116,800 in each of the previous two years
- A person with higher of either:
  - A total household income at or below the national poverty level for a family of four (Or)
  - Less than 50 % of the county median household income in each of the past two years
- Producer must utilize on-line tool to Self-Certify
- Size of farm is not a consideration

## Contract Information

- **Contract will be limited to \$20,000**
  - **Contract length can not exceed 5 years**
  - **Small Scale Farmer payment rate will be 75 %**
  - **Limited Resource Farmer payment rate will be 90 %**
- .....
- A cost-shared practice must be started within 12 months of contract approval. **Failure to may result in contract penalties and termination.**
  - The producer is expected to make continuous progress towards implementation of their contract, unless circumstances beyond the producer's control prevented the start of the practice.

### Eligibility

- All participants must be registered in the Service Center Information Management System (SCIMS) or grant permission to be registered in SCIMS.
- **Applicants must:**
  - Be agricultural producers who have a minimum of **\$1,000** in agricultural products produced and/or sold for 2 of the past 5 years or IRS Schedule F form showing profit or loss from the farm operation. The producer is responsible for self-certification.
  - Own or have control of the land (lease, rent, etc.) for term of contract,
  - Be actively engaged in the farming operation,
  - Be an individual, entity or joint operation,
  - Be willing to follow a prescribed grazing plan, if they have pastureland, in order to qualify for grazing practices, i.e. fencing, watering facilities, wells, etc.

