



United States Department of Agriculture  
Natural Resources Conservation Service

## Rhode Island State Office

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# NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Funding Available for Organic Initiative in Rhode Island- Application Deadline March 12, 2010

WARWICK, RI (February 3, 2010) – Rhode Island organic farmers and those in transition to organic production may sign-up now for technical and financial assistance under the Federal Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Organic Initiative administered by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Although sign-up is continuous throughout the year, farmers are highly encouraged to apply by March 12, 2010 in order for their applications to be reviewed and ranked for currently available 2010 funds.

Under the **2010 Organic Initiative**, participants will receive help implementing a variety of conservation practices including crop rotation, cover crops, nutrient management, pest management, prescribed grazing, forage harvest management, composting, water diversions and waterways, strip cropping, livestock watering facilities, fencing, and pollinator habitat. High tunnels - also known as hoop houses - are also included to help farmers increase the availability of locally grown produce in a conservation friendly way.

**Farmers should contact the Rhode Island Service Center for more information and to determine eligibility. Simply call our office at 401-822-8848, E-mail [NRCSInfo@ri.usda.gov](mailto:NRCSInfo@ri.usda.gov), or visit us at 60 Quaker Lane, Suite 46, Warwick, RI 02886. Application information is available at <http://www.ri.nrcs.usda.gov/APPLICATION.pdf>. Completed applications must be postmarked or received by the close of business, Friday, March 12, 2010.**

The **2010 Organic Initiative** is a nationwide special initiative to provide financial assistance to National Organic Program (NOP) certified organic producers as well as producers in the process of transitioning to organic production. Those applying for this special funding will be competing only among other organic/transitioning farmers. The objective of this initiative is to make EQIP assistance more available, appropriate, and accessible to organic food producers. Initiative rules limit the amount of funding a participant may receive to \$20,000 per year or \$80,000 over six years.

EQIP is a voluntary program that helps farmers and forest landowners address water quality, water conservation, invasive species control, soil quality, erosion control, nutrient and pest management, residue management, irrigation efficiency, energy conservation, air quality, and other natural resource concerns.