

Organic Initiative



What is the Organic Initiative?

This initiative is offered through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and is designed to assist organic producers meet their resource concerns and fulfill many of the requirements in an Organic System Plan (OSP). The 2012 Organic Initiative provides financial assistance to implement a broad set of conservation practices including, but not limited to assistance with:

- Developing a conservation plan
- Establishing boundaries and buffer zones
- Improving soil quality and organic matter while minimizing erosion
- Improving pest management
- Developing a grazing plan and improving grazing resources
- Improving waste utilization and composting
- Improving irrigation efficiency
- Enhancing cropping systems and nutrient management

Who can apply?

Eligible applicants include persons or entities that can self certify that they are certified organic, transitioning to organic production, or exempt from certification (those producers selling less than \$5000 organic products annually), and have related natural resource concerns on their agricultural operation. The applicant must demonstrate control of the eligible land which includes cropland, pastureland, and other farmland.

Special Initiative Signup Opportunities

Applications are accepted on a continuous basis throughout the year. Specific dates are set during the year where these applications are ranked and approved for funding. In 2012, these dates are Friday Feb.2, Friday March 30 and Friday June 1.

Some individual practices under this Organic Initiative have higher payments than regular EQIP, in recognition of the higher cost of seeds, fertilizers and management in an organic system.

NRCS staff have had training to help organic farmers access this opportunity for financial assistance of up to \$20,000 per year, and \$80,000 total. Cover crops and crop rotations, installing intensive grazing infrastructure (grazing plans, fencing, walkways, water lines), establishing wildlife and pollinator friendly habitat, and high tunnels are examples of potential practices available for funding under this program.

Contact your local NRCS office soon to meet with your conservation planning professional and determine which practices could enhance your farming operation.

List of Conservation Practices - Organic Initiative

- Access Control
- Alley Cropping
- Animal Mortality Facility
- Animal Trails and Walkways
- Brush Management
- Composting Facility
- Conservation Cover
- Conservation Crop Rotation
- Contour Buffer Strip
- Contour Farming
- Cover Crop
- Critical Area Planting
- Diversion
- Drainage Water Management
- Fence
- Field Border
- Filter Strip
- Forage and Biomass Planting
- Forage Harvest Management
- Grade Stabilization Structure
- Grassed Waterway
- Heavy Use Area Protection
- Herbaceous Weed Control
- Integrated Pest Management
- Integrated Pest Management Plan
- Irrigation System, Microirrigation
- Irrigation System, Sprinkler
- Irrigation System, Tailwater Recovery
- Irrigation Water Management
- Irrigation Water Management Plan
- Mulching
- Nutrient Management
- Nutrient Management Plan
- Organic Transition Plan
- Pipeline
- Prescribed Burning
- Prescribed Grazing
- Residue and Tillage Management, Mulch Till
- Residue and Tillage Management, Ridge Till
- Residue and Tillage Management, No Till
- Residue Management, Seasonal
- Riparian Forest Buffer
- Seasonal High Tunnel System for Crops
- Spring Development
- Stream Crossing
- Stripcropping
- Structure for Water Control
- Terrace
- Tree/Shrub Establishment
- Water and Sediment Control Basin
- Water Well
- Watering Facility
- Well Water Testing
- Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment
- Windbreak/Shelterbelt Restoration

For more information contact the NRCS office in your local USDA Service Center or visit www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov

For more specific information on “Eligible Conservation Practices, Cost Share Rates and Limits” for 2012, consult the NRCS website <http://www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip.html> under the Quick Access tab.

The USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.