

The Process: Steps After Submitting Your Application

About NRCS

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) works to protect and conserve natural resources on our nation's private lands.

As part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, NRCS administers conservation programs funded primarily through the 2008 Farm Bill.

The conservation provisions in the 2008 Farm Bill will affect farmers for years to come. New provisions continue to build on the conservation gains made by U.S. citizens over the past decade. Existing programs have been simplified and new programs created to address high priority environmental protection goals.

In addition to addressing a broad range of environmental goals, the 2008 Farm Bill includes increased financial assistance for new, limited resource, and socially disadvantaged farmers.



Contact NRCS:

Delaware USDA Service Centers

Newark Field Office (Serving New Castle County)
2430 Old County Rd., Newark, DE 19702
302-832-3100 ext. 3

Dover Field Office (Serving Kent County)
800 Bay Rd., Dover, DE 19901
302-741-2600 ext. 3

Georgetown Field Office (Serving Sussex County)
21315 Berlin Rd., Unit 3, Georgetown, DE 19947
302-856-3990 ext. 3

“What You Need to Know AFTER Applying for Financial Assistance through NRCS Conservation Programs”

Introduction

This outline of the NRCS application process covers steps that range from completing an application to implementing the contract and items in between.

Step 1: Completing the Application

- The NRCS application consists of two parts. The first part is a short questionnaire that requires basic contact information and information on land control. A signature and date authenticates your written interest in the program.
- The second part is a 15-page appendix that details requirements **IF** the applicant receives a contract. A signature is required only to document receipt.
- Participants should indicate their interest in specific practices when applying.
- Applying for assistance **IS NOT** guarantee of a contract. If the application is accepted and the applicant declines the contract, there is no financial obligation by either party.
- Producers will need to work with the Farm Services Agency to complete the Adjusted Gross Income and Highly Erodible Lands/Wetland Conservation forms. FSA assigns the operation a farm and tract number, which is used on the application.

Step 2: You're Determined Eligible. Now What?

- An NRCS representative will contact you to discuss the program and eligible practices offered. Based on the identified resource concerns, the NRCS planner and you select the practices for your operation and a conservation plan is developed.
- Once NRCS receives its funding allocation, eligible applications will be ranked with all others received before the cut-off date and scored based on National, state, and local ranking factors.
- The highest ranked applications will be approved for funding until the money is exhausted.
 - o NRCS will contact you if your application ranks low and is not approved for funding. You may leave your application on file for consideration next year or cancel it.
 - o NRCS will contact you if your application is approved for funding. If you choose to move forward, you will need to contact NRCS to make an appointment to develop a contract.



Steps After Submitting Your Application

Historically Underserved Farmers

Historically Underserved customers may be eligible for an advance payment up to 30 percent of the anticipated costs to be incurred to purchase materials or services to implement a practice. The landowner must make a formal request, and if approved, must agree to complete project within 30 days.

Additional Information

For additional information on NRCS programs and services, please visit www.de.nrcs.usda.gov or contact your local USDA Service Center.

In Sussex County, call 302-856-3990, ext 3;
in Kent County, call 302-741-2600, ext. 3; and
in New Castle County, call 302-832-3100, ext. 3.

Step 3: Developing and Signing a NRCS Contract

- Based on your discussions with NRCS and your conservation plan, a contract will be developed.
- The contract will specify all of the expectations for your operation. Once you sign, you agree to a legal bond with USDA.
- A SF-1199A - Direct Deposit form must be filed. The participant must provide their bank account and routing number to receive payments through electronic fund transfer.

Step 4: Implementing the Contract

The steps vary slightly for implementing a contract with management versus structural practices.

- Steps for Management Practices:
 - o NRCS will give checklists of expectations to the farmer. These include practice standards, job sheets, etc...
 - o Farmer will review and sign all paperwork, and complete all management practices fully.
 - o NRCS will inspect the practice, review and update the plan, and make payment.
 - o After final inspection, farmers can expect payment within 10 business days (barring changes in banking information or entity membership).
- Steps for Structural Practices:
 - o Farmer will need to get bids for the structure and hire the contractor.
 - o Participant will contact NRCS before construction begins.
 - o Farmer will collect his receipts (from contractors). For structural payments, farmers can include own labor bill, if appropriate.
 - o The landowner will contact NRCS once the project is complete. NRCS will inspect the structure to ensure it meets the standard.
 - o Once approved, the farmer signs the paperwork, and NRCS will process payment. Payment can be expected within 10 business days (barring changes in banking information or entity membership).