

FY 2005 South Carolina - Environmental Quality Incentives Program

- The FY 2005 EQIP signup is continuous. The first cut-off for applicants is January 21, 2005 with ranking to be completed by February 4, 2005. Applications need to be entered into ProTracts by **February 4, 2005** and should include estimated costs and ranking score. (***EQIP contracts may be for a tract, farm, or multiple farms.***)
- The resource concern categories for Local Work Groups (LWG) to prioritize are:

Soil Quality	Water Quantity
Surface Water Quality	Air Quality
Grazing Lands Health	Plant Population Health
Wetlands Health	At-Risk Species Habitat Quality
- LWGs should rank the resource concerns for their county and document the concerns and tie breaking procedures in the minutes of their meetings. This should be coordinated and documented with their district staff with adequate time for applications to be ranked. Tie breakers can not be based on “costs to the program” or “size of operation”. (National Bulletin 300-4-3)
- RANKING - Applications will be entered into the on-line EQIP ranking system and will be screened by resource concern before practices are linked to the application.
- Bonus Points: (Maximum 25)
 - *Producers who exclude cattle from sensitive areas with a Riparian Forest Buffer will receive 25 bonus points. Sensitive areas include: Wetlands, reservoirs, and streams. Minimum 35’ riparian buffer, follow the Riparian Forest Buffer Standard (391).*
- Eligibility for EQIP is contingent on a resource concern existing on the land unit for which the applicant is applying. The resource concern will be documented on a SC-CPA-52 and additional supporting documents as needed. When the planner receives an EQIP application, the SC-CPA-52 should be completed in the field to document resource concerns. The planner then recommends practices to the applicant that will address the resource concerns found on-site, including cultural resources.
- When a practice is selected for cost-share, it will be applied on all acres needed in the contract based on assessment tools and/or procedures.
- Cost shared practices will be at a rate of 50% of the participant’s cost not to exceed the state average cost, unless the applicant self certifies as a Limited Resource Farmer. Limited Resource Farmers are eligible for 90% cost-share. Applicants who self certify as New/Beginning Farmers shall receive cost share at the 50% rate. Incentive payments will be the same for all contracts.
- Eligibility of Rented Land – The provisions requiring “satisfactory evidence of control of the land” have not changed. Thus the requirements will be the same as previously used for EQIP in S.C. For management practices, the producer can have a lease for the contract period or can document historical use of the land (operated for a minimum of 5 years) and demonstrate intent to operate the farm and maintain control at least through the contract period. If the contract includes structural practices or establishment of perennial vegetative cover, the landowner must also sign the contract in addition to the operator.
- **New ag-waste systems will not be cost-shared.** Before these practice can be undertaken there **HAS TO BE** an existing resource concern documented on the SC-CPA-52. “A CNMP must be developed prior to the implementation of a waste storage/treatment facility. CNMP implementation is to be completed no later than three years after the installation of the waste storage or treatment facility, unless an approved waiver is granted by the State Conservationist.” (EQIP Manual 515.111, May 2004)
- For Practice 422 Hedgerows the cost list units are 1C or 1M. Cost share rates are based on multiples of 100 (1C) or 1000 (1M).
- The total for all combined incentive payments will be limited to \$40,000 per operation (regardless of the number of entities, e.g. partners). These limits apply for all 2002 Farm Bill EQIP contracts.
 - Example: Farmer approved for \$15,000 of 329A incentive payment on a 2003 contract would be eligible for only \$25,000 more in other incentive payments. **NOTE: Must remember that incentives payments for a practice are limited to 3 years maximum per practice.**
- County EQIP Fund Allocations will be made based on the total dollar amount of applications statewide by the cut-off date. These applications will be in the initial ranking and changes will not be permitted after the cutoff date (February 4, 2005).

ANAEROBIC DIGESTER – AMBIENT TEMPERATURE 365 (Number)

Purpose: To biologically treat waste as a component of a waste management system to: produce biogas and capture for energy, improve air quality, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions

Applicability: Part of a planned animal waste management system. Landowner is responsible for obtaining all necessary permits prior to construction or installation.

Cost-share rate: Actual Amount (AA) not to exceed a maximum of \$95,000

Components: Digester, gas collection, transfer and control system; and gas utilization equipment.

Limitations: This practice requires the development and implementation of a CNMP.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for life span of 25 years. The limit of \$95,000 applies to this practice individually and in combination with 366 and 367

ANAEROBIC DIGESTER – CONTROLLED TEMPERATURE 366 (Number)

Purpose: To biologically treat waste as a component of a waste management system to: produce biogas and capture for energy, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce pathogens, and improve nutrient management.

Applicability: Part of a planned animal waste management system. Landowner is responsible for obtaining all necessary permits prior to construction or installation.

Cost-share rate: Actual Amount (AA) not to exceed a maximum of \$95,000

Components: Digester, gas collection, transfer and control system; and gas utilization equipment

Limitations: This practice requires the development and implementation of a CNMP.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for life span of 25 years. The limit of \$95,000 applies to this practice individually and in combination with 366 and 367

ANIMAL MORTALITY FACILITY 316 (Number)

Purpose: An on-farm facility for the treatment or disposal of livestock and poultry carcasses.

Applicability: Landowner is responsible for obtaining all necessary permits prior to construction or installation. This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to support one or more of the following purposes:

- Decrease non-point source pollution of surface and groundwater resources
- Reduce the impact of odors that result from improperly handled animal mortality
- Decrease the likelihood of the spread of disease or other pathogens that result from the interaction of animal mortality and predators
- To provide contingencies for normal and catastrophic mortality events

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Components: 1) INCINERATOR LOW – Less than 400 pound capacity; 2) INCINERATOR HIGH – Greater than 400 pound capacity; 3) Dead Animal Composter (SqFt)

Limitations: This practice requires the development and implementation of a CNMP. *Be sure to specify to the landowner that the incinerator must meet SCDHEC air quality standards regarding emissions.*

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 15 years following installation.

Q. Can producers who have previously received cost share on a composter and now want to sign up for an incinerator? A. The composter should be used to its capacity and life span (15 years). If this is not enough to handle the mortality, this is a resource concern and we can cost share on an incinerator to handle the additional mortality, but we will not cost share on an incinerator just because the applicant no longer wants to compost.

CLOSURE OF WASTE IMPOUNDMENTS 360 (Number)

Purpose: To protect the quality of surface and groundwater resources, to eliminate a safety hazard for humans and livestock, to safeguard the public health.

Applicability: This practices applies to agricultural waste impoundments that are no longer needed as a part of a waste management system and are to be permanently closed. Landowner is responsible for obtaining all necessary permits prior to construction or installation.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan. Landowner is responsible for obtaining all necessary permits prior to construction.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for life span of 15 years after installation.

COMPOSTING FACILITY 317 (Number)

Purpose: To reduce the pollution potential of organic agricultural wastes to surface and ground water. This is a facility to process raw manure or other raw organic by-products into biologically stable organic material.

Applicability: This practice applies where:

Organic waste material is generated by agricultural production or processing.

- A composting facility is a component of a planned agricultural waste management system;
- A composting facility can be constructed, operated and maintained without polluting air and/or water resources;
- There is a need to improve air quality by reducing the emissions of odorous gases; and,
- The facility is operated as a component of an agricultural management system.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Components: Composting facility could include a structure, concrete pad, heavy use area (SqFt), critical area treatment (Ac), land smoothing (Ac). These items are needed to insure traffic, erosion control, and runoff are parts of the system.

Limitations: This practice requires the development and implementation of a CNMP.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 15 years following installation.

CONSERVATION COVER 327 (Acre)

Purpose: To reduce soil erosion and sedimentation, improve water quality, and create or enhance wildlife habitat.

Applicability: On land retired from crop production. This practice does not apply to plantings for forage production or to critical area plantings.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 3 years following installation or for the duration of the contract if contract is more than 3 years.

COVER CROP 340 (Acre)

Purpose: To control erosion during periods when the major crops do not furnish adequate cover; provide organic material to the soil; and improve infiltration, aeration, and tilth. The Cover Crop practice is an incentive payment that can be used in conjunction with planting of low residue crops. The eligible low residue crops are cotton, tobacco, silage crops, peanuts and vegetables. The cover crop shall be used to provide needed cover for erosion control during non crop periods or to provide residue cover for no-till cropping systems.

Applicability: On cropland, certain wildlife areas, orchards, vineyards, and small fruit areas. To be eligible for incentive payments, cover crops must follow low residue crops such as tobacco, vegetable crops, peanuts, cotton, soybeans, and silage crops. Cover crops following a high residue crop such as corn (grain) are not eligible. The cover crops are to be no-tilled unless it follows tobacco, vegetable crops, or silage crops in which case tillage would not increase the potential for erosion or significantly reduce soil organic matter.

Cost-share rate: Incentive Payment (FR)

Limitations: Amount is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan. The incentive payment is for all components necessary for successful implementation of the practice. To be eligible for incentive payments, cover crops must follow low residue crops such as tobacco, vegetable crops, peanuts, cotton, soybeans, and silage crops. Cover crops following high residue crops such as corn (grain) are not eligible. The cover crops are to be no tilled unless it follows tobacco, vegetable crops, or silage crops in which case, tillage would not increase the potential for erosion or significantly reduce soil organic matter.

Maintenance: As specified in conservation plan or no less than 1 year.

CRITICAL AREA PLANTING 342 (Acre)

Purpose: To stabilize the soil, reduce damage from sediment and runoff to downstream areas, and improve wildlife habitat and visual resources.

Applicability: On highly erodible or critically eroding areas. These areas usually cannot be stabilized by ordinary conservation treatment and management and if left untreated can cause severe erosion or sediment damage. Examples of applicable areas are dams, dikes, mine spoil, levees, cuts, fills, surface-mined areas, composting sheds, and denuded or gullied areas where vegetation is difficult to establish by usual planting methods.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan. Use of this practice is limited to situations that currently have high erosion rates (> 15 tons/acre) or if untreated, will incur significantly accelerated erosion. Nutrient and pest management shall be applied to the extent necessary for successful implementation of this practice. These components shall be applied as needed for this practice without additional cost shares.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a life span of 10 years following installation.

DIKE 356 (Feet)

Purpose: To permit improvement of agricultural land by facilitating water storage and control in connection with wildlife and other developments to enhance biodiversity and the ecosystem.

Applicability: On agricultural lands where the practice is needed for the enhancement of wetland wildlife and the improvement of habitat and biodiversity. Critical area planting and mulching should be used to insure adequate vegetation.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan. The landowner must obtain any needed permits prior to signing the contract.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 20 years following installation.

DIVERSION 362 (Feet)

Purpose: To divert excess water from one area for use or safe disposal in other areas and to control erosion and improve water quality.

Applicability: This practice applies to sites where; (1) runoff damages cropland, pastureland, farmsteads, feedlots, or conservation practices such as terraces or stripcropping; (2) surface flow and shallow subsurface flow caused by seepage are damaging sloping upland; (3) a diversion is required as part of a pollution abatement system.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 10 years following installation.

EARLY SUCCESSIONAL WILDLIFE HABITAT 647 (Acre)

Purpose: To increase plant diversity and to provide habitat for declining species and other wildlife.

Applicability: On lands that are suitable for the kinds of wildlife and plant species that are desired.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: The early successional vegetation shall be maintained by rotational disking or burning.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 15 years following installation.

FENCE 382 (Feet)

Purpose: To: (1) exclude livestock grazing and/or animal traffic from sensitive areas; (2) subdivide grazing land to facilitate implementation of a grazing plan; (3) protect new seedlings and plants from grazing; (4) confine and/or control domestic livestock on grazing land; (5) control access to areas by people.

Applicability: On any area requiring control or exclusion of livestock or people

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan. Cost-sharing for gates, energizers, and legally required boundary fences is not allowed. Cost-sharing for cross fences will be based on type and quantity required for the implementation of a grazing plan meeting the prescribed grazing (528A) standard. Cost-sharing is not applicable for construction of replacement boundary or cross fencing.

Provide the participant with a specification that will identify the type of fence to be constructed, spacing of and type of posts, type and number of wires, type and location of brace units and a map identifying the location of the fence. Primary purpose of fencing in South Carolina within the EQIP program is to remove animals from surface water and improve utilization of grass. Further guidance on cost share for boundary fences is found in the EQIP Manual, section 515.101, h. Ineligible Costs. It states "Boundary fences or property line fences may be eligible, as determined by the NRCS Designated Conservationist, if: (1) The fence is an integral part of a conservation management system, such as a planned grazing system that facilitates improved management of grazing land, or

protects certain areas from livestock when it is necessary for proper use of the area, or (2) The area adjacent to the boundary fence is vital to the success of the conservation management system and (3) The primary purpose is not to separate ownership or exclude livestock from transportation networks, residential, commercial, or industrial areas. Cost share on fencing for other purposes or resource concerns is not allowed". Cross fencing is allowed when it is part of a prescribed grazing system.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 20 years following installation.

FIELD BORDER 386 (Feet)

Purpose: To control erosion; protect edges of fields that are used as "turnrows" or travel lanes for farm machinery; reduce competition from adjacent woodland; provide wildlife food and cover; or improve the landscape.

Applicability: At field edges, especially edges of crop fields.

Field borders that address erosion and water quality concerns must be planned on the entire perimeter with those concerns. Field borders must be planned based on the following criteria **for wildlife considerations:**

- >25' wide must be planned on no less than 50% of the total perimeter of all fields in the contract
- 15' - 25' wide must be planned on no less than 75% of the total perimeter of all fields in the contract

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for lifespan of 10 years following installation.

FILTER STRIP 393 (Acre)

Purpose: To remove sediment and other pollutants from runoff or waste water by filtration, deposition, infiltration, absorption, decomposition, and volatilization, thereby reducing pollution and protecting the environment.

Applicability: This practice applies: (1) on cropland at the lower edge of fields or above conservation practices such as terraces or diversions, or on fields adjacent to streams, ponds, and lakes, and (2) on forest land where filter strips are needed as part of a forestry operation to reduce delivery of sediment into waterways.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for lifespan of 10 years following installation.

FIREBREAK 394 (Feet)

Purpose: To protect soil, water, and plant resources by reducing or preventing damage from fire.

Applicability: On areas where damaging fires are likely or where fire may be prescribed as a cultural or protective measure.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan. Payment limited to 1 year.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for lifespan of 10 years following installation.

FOREST SITE PREPARATION 490 (Acre)

Purpose: To prepare land for establishing a stand of trees to conserve soil and water, to improve watersheds, or to produce wood crops.

Applicability: In under stocked areas or in areas of undesired vegetation where the soils are suited to growing trees for wood crops.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan..

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for one (1) year after installation.

FOREST STAND IMPROVEMENT 666 (Acre)

Purpose: To initiate forest stand regeneration, reduce the potential of damage from wildfire, pests, and moisture stress, increase carbon storage in selected trees, improve water conservation, restore natural plant communities, improve wildlife habitat, reduce sedimentation and runoff and restore natural plant communities.

Applicability: (1) Forest land where the presence of exotic, introduced or invasive species has been identified as a resource concern; (2) Forest land at high risk for disease, insect infestation or wildfire; (3) Forest land with existing insect or disease infestations; (4) Forest land contributing sediment and runoff to surface water bodies; (5) Forest with stand densities that are too great to facilitate good forest development; (6) Forest with stand densities too great to provide adequate wildlife habitat.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 10 years following installation.

FOREST TRAILS AND LANDINGS 655 (Acre)

Purpose: To minimize onsite and offsite damage to soil, water, plant and animal resources during periods of access, and to provide access to forest stands for management.

Applicability: Forest Land in need of access to address Forest Health Resource Concerns and that meets one or more of the following conditions; (1) Forest Land adjacent to, or encompassing streams, lakes, ponds or wetlands; (2) Forest land containing soils with moderate to severe limitations for skid trails, log landings, haul roads or equipment; (3) Forest Land containing soils rated moderate to severe for erosion hazard.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 5 years following installation.

GRADE STABILIZATION STRUCTURE 410 (Number)

Purpose: To stabilize the grade and control erosion in natural or artificial channels, to prevent the formation or advance of gullies, and to enhance environmental quality and reduce pollution hazards.

Applicability: In areas where the concentration and flow velocity of water require structures to stabilize the grade in channels or to control gully erosion. Special attention shall be given to maintaining or improving habitat for fish and wildlife where applicable.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 15 years following installation.

GRASSED WATERWAY 412 (Acre)

Purpose: To convey runoff from terraces, diversions, or other water concentrations without causing erosion and to improve water quality.

Applicability: All sites where added capacity, vegetative protection, or both are required to control erosion resulting from concentrated runoff and where such control can be achieved by using this practice alone or combined with other conservation practices. This practice is not applicable where its construction would destroy important woody wildlife cover and the present watercourse is not seriously eroding.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Components: 1) LOW – Less than 20 cubic yards per 1,000 square feet; 2) HIGH – More than 20 cubic yards per 1,000 square feet.

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 10 years following installation.

HEAVY USE AREA PROTECTION 561 (SqFt)

Purpose: To stabilize facility areas frequently and intensely used by people, animals or vehicles.

Applicability: This standard applies to the following sites; (1) on intensely used areas for waste management systems; (2) surfaces heavily traveled by livestock which erode, deteriorate or reduce water quality without surfacing (e.g. areas around animal watering facility or animal trails and walkways.)

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Components: 1) LOW – Geotextile and rock; 2) HIGH – Concrete/Geoweb with Geotextile

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 10 years following installation.

HEDGEROW PLANTING 422 (Feet)

Purpose: To establish a zone of trees and shrubs within an open field or pasture to enhance wildlife habitat and/or to create a corridor for wildlife movement.

Applicability: Within open fields or pastures.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC) cost share based on multiples of 100 (1C) or 1000 (1M) shrubs

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 15 years following installation.

IRRIGATION SYSTEM CONVERSION, MICRO 441 (Acre)

IRRIGATION SYSTEM CONVERSION, SPRINKLER 442 (Acre)

Purpose: To efficiently and uniformly apply irrigation water to maintain adequate soil water for optimum plant growth without causing excessive water loss, erosion, or water quality impairment.

Irrigation practices (441 & 442) – These practices are for treating water conservation resource concern and are NOT for new systems. It is a retrofit of an existing system to make it more efficient on conserving water.

- EQIP Policy specifies that management units must have been irrigated two of the last five years to be eligible for any irrigation practice. Presence of a sprinkler irrigation system, cropping history documenting that the field was cropped for two of the last five years, and a signed statement by the producer that the field was irrigated three of the last five years are supporting documentation.
- To be eligible the modified system/components must improve irrigation water use efficiency. The eligible conversions will improve water use efficiency by definition.
- The cost share percentage for irrigation practices is limited to 50% of the state average cost for irrigation with the limitation of \$25,000 per contract.

Applicability: Applies to the planning, design, and implementation of the overall sprinkler irrigation water distribution system. This practice pertains to all sprinkler components except for special structures such as permanently installed main and lateral pipelines (conservation practice 430 – Irrigation Water Conveyance), which should be included as separate items on an EQIP contract, and Pumping Plants (533), which are not eligible for cost-share in conjunction with an Irrigation System, Sprinkler (442).

This practice applies only where a modified Irrigation System, Micro (441) or Sprinkler (442) is required to enable an improvement in irrigation water application efficiency and uniformity, which will allow for the conservation of irrigation water resources and/or the improvement of surface or ground water quality

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost not to exceed \$25,000 per contract.

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 10 years (MICRO) and for a lifespan of 15 years (SPRINKLER) following installation.

LAND CLEARING 460 (Acre)

Purpose: To remove irregularities on the land surface that interferes with the implementation of a needed conservation practice.

Applicability: Applies on areas with irregularities that interfere with the application of needed conservation treatments. This practice is not eligible to receive points in the EQIP application evaluation; they will be eligible as cost share practices only when required as part of another conservation practice. Examples include using Land Clearing (460) to remove trees or stumps from an odd corner in order to better install a planned conservation practice.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: This practice is not eligible for cost sharing when the primary purpose is to increase crop production or production capacity.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 10 years following installation.

LANDSMOOTHING 466 (Acre)

Purpose: To remove irregularities on the land surface that interfere with the implementation of a needed conservation practice.

Applicability: Applies on areas with irregularities that interfere with the application of needed conservation treatments. This practice is not eligible to receive points in the EQIP application evaluation; it is eligible for cost share only when required as part of another conservation practice. Examples include (1) using Land Smoothing (466) to remove irregularities in order to improve terrace alignment or to facilitate contour farming.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: This practice is not eligible for cost sharing when the primary purpose is to increase crop production or production capacity.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 10 years following installation.

MANURE TRANSFER 634 (Number)

Purpose: To transfer animal manure and other waste associated with animal production to a point of utilization.

Applicability: Where manure generated by livestock production needs to be moved to the point of utilization. Landowner is responsible for obtaining all necessary permits prior to construction or installation.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 10 years following installation.

MULCHING 484 (Acre)

Purpose: To conserve moisture, prevent surface compaction or crusting, reduce runoff and erosion, control weeds, and help establish plant cover.

Applicability: Used on critical areas as part of establishing vegetation (see 342 standards) on a constructed practice.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent required by the conservation practice standard used in support of the conservation practice CRITICAL AREA PLANTING 342.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for lifespan of 1 year.

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT 590 (Acre)

Purpose: To properly utilize manure or organic by-products as a plant nutrient source to budget and supply nutrients for plant production and to minimize water quality concerns.

Applicability: On cropland and pastureland where nutrients are being used and resource concerns associated with the use of nutrients are present. Note that a CNMP may include fields not under control of the waste producer. For example, a waste producer may reach a written agreement to apply animal waste on a neighbor's fields and include those fields in his CNMP. However, all land included in an EQIP contract must be under the control of the participant. Thus, some fields included in the CNMP may not be eligible for EQIP. The CNMP is for the generator of the waste. Lands on which a producer purchases animal waste for application are not eligible for the nutrient management payment.

Cost-share rate: Incentive Payment (FR)

Components: (A) Nutrient Management (Land application of animal manures/CNMP); (B) Nutrient Management (Land application of animal manures via injection or chisel and furrow application); (C) Nutrient Management (Precision Ag/Variable rate application).

Limitations: No more than one of the components under Nutrient Management shall be eligible for an incentive payment on any field:

- A. Nutrient Management – (Land application of animal manures/CNMP)—is eligible in conjunction with implementation of a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP). This practice will not be certified for payment until the producer has submitted waste and soil test results, records documenting product use, time of application, etc. This incentive payment will be for one (1) year for the first application of the waste. The practice must adhere to the CNMP requirements for EQIP contracts involving animal waste management practices.
- B. Nutrient Management – (Land application of animal manures via injection or chisel furrow application). The requirements for this practice are the same as listed in (A.) with the following exceptions:
 - Application must be by injection systems or by systems that chisel with immediate application behind the chisel shank to facilitate rapid movement into the soil surface.
 - Incorporation systems such as surface application and incorporating with a disk are not eligible.
 - This incentive payment practice will be for up to three (3) years.

C. Nutrient Management – (Precision Ag/Variable Rate Application)

- The producer shall document nutrient inputs on each field for crop year 2004 as a “before treatment” condition.
- Soils shall be sampled on the basis of grids or management zones within the field and nutrient inputs will be made in each grid/zone in accordance with the recommendations for that specific grid/management zone.
- This practice will not be certified for payment until the producer has submitted soil test results and records documenting product use, timing, etc.
- The producer shall maintain a spreadsheet recording the inputs on each grid/management zone.
- This incentive practice will be for up to three (3) years.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for one year following the incentive payment.

PASTURE AND HAYLAND PLANTING 512 (Acre)

Purpose: To reduce erosion and to produce high quality forage, to adjust land use and to improve water quality.

Applicability: On existing pasture and hayland or on land that is converted to forage from other uses.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Components: 1) LOW – Includes Bahia, Kentucky 31, Tall Fescue, Common Bermuda, and other species with similar establishment costs. 2) HIGH – Includes Coastal Bermuda, Native warm season grasses, MaxQ Fescue, and other species with similar establishment costs.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 10 years following practice installation.

PIPELINE 516 (Feet)

Purpose: To convey water from a source of supply to points of use for livestock.

Applicability: Where conveyance of water in a closed conduit is desirable or necessary to conduct water from one point to another for livestock use.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan. When a pipeline is installed for the purpose of providing water for livestock this facilitating practice must support the implementation of a grazing plan meeting the Prescribed Grazing (528A) standard.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 20 years following installation.

POND 378 (Number)

Purpose: Provide a source of water for livestock on an existing livestock operation.

Applicability: The pond will facilitate proper distribution of grazing through the implementation of a grazing plan meeting the Prescribed Grazing (528A) standard.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: Cost sharing on ponds is limited to those that provide a source of livestock water on an existing operation. *Documentation must indicate that the pond is the most economical and feasible alternative for providing the livestock water. Cost sharing will be limited to the size needed to reasonably meet the requirements for livestock water.* Designs for livestock watering systems include combinations of trough/tank; heavy use area protection; pipelines, etc. A design must be developed for the watering system based on animal need; however, quality water for a defined period requires sizing above basic livestock needs. Use the “Livestock Watering Facility” template to aid in calculations and design of these systems and also to record the size needed to meet livestock water needs. The template is located in the eFOTG, Section IV, Tools, Engineering Tools.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 20 years following installation.

PRACTICE APPLICATION 912 (Number)

This practice/code is reserved for TSP use. If you have a participant who is interested in using a TSP, the state office will assist you. Please inform Bethel or Shawnn should you have this situation.

PRACTICE CHECK-OUT 913 (Number)

This practice/code is reserved for TSP use. If you have a participant who is interested in using a TSP, the state office will assist you. Please inform Bethel or Shawnn should you have this situation.

PRACTICE DESIGN 911 (Number)

This practice/code is reserved for TSP use. If you have a participant who is interested in using a TSP, the state office will assist you. Please inform Bethel or Shawnn should you have this situation.

PRESCRIBED BURNING 338 (Acre)

Purpose: To control undesirable vegetation; prepare sites for planting or seeding; control plant disease; reduce fire hazards; improve wildlife habitat; forage production and forage quality; and to facilitate distribution of grazing and browsing animals.

Applicability: On woodland, wildlife areas, or native hay meadows.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan. All burning must be done according to a preapproved burn plan. The landowner is responsible for obtaining all necessary permits and permissions. If forest stand improvement is needed, the forest stand improvement will be implemented prior to the prescribed burning.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 5 years.

PRESCRIBED GRAZING 528A (Acre)

Purpose: To improve or maintain health and vigor of desirable forage species; (2) improve or maintain quantity and quality of forage; (3) provide soil protection from erosion; and (4) improve water quality.

Applicability: On all lands where grazing animals are managed. A prescribed grazing plan must be developed in accordance with the practice standard. Certification of the prescribed grazing practice shall be based primarily on the documentation of use of the planned rotation grazing system and adherence to the minimum heights.

Cost-share rate: Incentive payment (FR)

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan.

Facilitating practices, including Fence (382), Pasture and Hay land Planting (512), Pipeline (516), Water Facility (614) must support the implementation of a grazing plan meeting the Prescribed Grazing (528A) standard.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 5 years after practice installation.

PUMPING PLANT 533 (Number)

Purpose: To transfer water for a conservation need.

Applicability: Wherever water must be pumped to accomplish a conservation objective.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost not to exceed a maximum (AM)

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 15 years following installation.

SPRING DEVELOPMENT 574 (Number)

Purpose: To improve the distribution of water or to increase the quantity of water for livestock.

Applicability: Development shall be confined to springs or seepage areas that can furnish a dependable supply of suitable water during the period or periods of use. The need for and feasibility of protection from flooding, sedimentation, and contamination shall be considered in determining the suitability of a site for development.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan. Landowner is responsible for obtaining all necessary permits prior to construction. Costs of any needed pipeline or watering facility are not included in the cost share limit and are separate cost-shareable items.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for 10 years after installation.

STREAM HABITAT IMPROVEMENT MANAGEMENT 395 (Acre)

Purpose: To provide suitable habitat for desired aquatic species and diverse communities and to provide channel morphology and associated riparian characteristics.

Applicability: Streams where habitat deficiencies limit survival, growth, reproduction, and/or diversity of aquatics.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan. The landowner is responsible for obtaining any necessary permits prior to the start of construction.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 10 years following installation.

STREAMBANK AND SHORELINE PROTECTION 580 (Feet)

Purpose: To stabilize or protect banks of streams, lakes, estuaries, or excavated channels for one or more of the following purposes: (1) to prevent the loss of land or damage to utilities, roads, buildings, or other facilities adjacent to the banks; (2) to maintain the capacity of the channel; (3) to control channel meander that would adversely affect downstream facilities; (4) to reduce sediment loads causing downstream damages and pollution; or (5) to improve the stream for recreation or as habitat for fish and wildlife.

Applicability: This practice applies to natural or excavated channels where the streambanks are susceptible to erosion from the action of water, ice, or debris or to damage from livestock or vehicular traffic. It also applies to controlling erosion on shorelines where the problem can be solved with relatively simple structural measures, vegetation, or upland erosion control practices and where failure of structural measures will not create a hazard to life or result in serious damage to property.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan. Landowner is responsible for obtaining necessary permits prior to start of construction.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for lifespan of 20 years following installation.

STRUCTURE FOR WATER CONTROL 587 (Number)

Purpose: To control the stage, discharge, distribution, delivery, or direction of flow of water in open channels or water use areas. Also used for water quality control, such as sediment reduction or temperature regulation. These structures are also used to protect fish and wildlife and other natural resources.

Applicability: This practice applies wherever a permanent structure is needed as an integral part of an irrigation, drainage, or other water control system to serve one or more of the following functions: (1) to conduct water from one elevation to a lower elevation within, to, or from a ditch, channel, or canal; (2) to control the elevation of water in drainage ditches; (3) to control the direction of channel flow resulting from tides and high water or backflow from flooding; (4) to control the level of water table, to remove surface or subsurface water from adjoining land and to flood land to manage water levels for wildlife; (5) to convey water over, under, or along a ditch, canal, road, railroad, or other barriers; or (6) to modify waterflow to provide habitat for fish, wildlife, and other aquatic animals.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to the installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan. Landowner is responsible for obtaining necessary permits prior to construction.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for lifespan of 20 years following installation.

TERRACE 600 (Feet)

Purpose: To: (1) reduce slope length, (2) reduce erosion, (3) reduce sediment content in runoff water; (4) improve water quality; (5) intercept and conduct surface runoff at a non erosive velocity to a stable outlet; (6) prevent gully development; and (9) reduce flooding.

Applicability: This standard applies where: (1) water erosion is a problem; (2) there is a need to conserve water; (3) the soils and topography are such that terraces can be constructed and farmed with reasonable effort; (4) a suitable outlet can be provided; or (5) runoff and sediment can damage land or improvements downstream or impair water quality.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for lifespan of 10 years following installation.

TREATMENT OF POULTRY LITTER TO REDUCE SOLUBLE PHOSPHORUS 786 (Number)

Purpose: To reduce ammonia emissions from litter and minimize phosphorus runoff from application fields.

Applicability: Situations in which the amount of soluble phosphorus needs to be reduced to minimize the potential of phosphorus loading in runoff.

Cost-share rate: Incentive Payment (FR)

Components: 1) **LOW** - Treatment of Poultry Litter – [2-3 Ton/Yr/20,000SqFtHouse (No)](4 flocks or less/Year) and 2) **HIGH** - Treatment of Poultry Litter – [4-5 Ton/Yr/20,000SqFtHouse (No)](5 or more flocks/year). Note: Houses that differ from 20,000 SqFt will be included as appropriate in increments of 20,000 SqFt.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained one year after the final year of payment.

TREE/SHRUB ESTABLISHMENT 612 (Acre)

Purpose: To establish or reinforce a stand of trees to conserve soil and moisture; protect a watershed.

Applicability: In open fields or on other areas; where erosion control or watershed protection is needed. As with other practices on the average cost list, eligibility of tree/shrub establishment must be based on the treatment of an identified natural resource concern. Tree planting on cropland, for example, may be eligible due a concern such as soil quality (erosion), water quality, or habitat quality. General reforestation (such as replanting of loblolly pines) on areas recently clearcut would be principally a production practice is not eligible. **(This means cutover land is not eligible – period!)**

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: Sites must be suitable for the specie(s) to be planted.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 15 years following date of installation.

UNDERGROUND OUTLET 620 (Feet)

Purpose: To dispose of excess water from terraces, diversions, subsurface drains, surface drains, trickle tubes or principal spillways from dams (outside the dam area only), roof runoff systems, water and sediment control basins, or other concentrations without causing damage by erosion or flooding.

Applicability: This practice applies where: (1) excess surface water needs to be disposed of; (2) a buried outlet is needed for diversions (NRCS standard - 362), terraces (NRCS standard - 600), or similar practices; (3) an underground outlet can be installed that will safely dispose of excess water; and (4) surface outlets are impractical because of stability problems, climatic conditions, land use, or equipment traffic.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for lifespan of 20 years following installation.

UPLAND WILDLIFE HABITAT MANAGEMENT 645 (Acre)

Purpose: To create, maintain, or enhance habitat suitable for sustaining desired kinds of upland wildlife.

Applicability: On all lands that are suitable for the kinds of wildlife food or cover plants that are needed.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan. The practice must be in accordance with the South Carolina conservation practice standard for Upland Wildlife Habitat Management.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 1 year following installation.

WASTE FACILITY COVER 367 (Number)

Purpose: To cover a waste facility for water quality improvement, air quality improvement, and capture of biogas for energy production.

Applicability: Landowner is responsible for obtaining all necessary permits prior to construction or installation. This practice applies where:

- Exclusion of precipitation from an animal waste storage or treatment facility will improve management of an existing or planned system.
- Capture and controlled release or flaring of emissions from an existing or planned agricultural waste storage will improve air quality.
- Bio-treatment of emissions from an existing or planned waste storage or treatment facility will improve air quality
- Biogas production and capture for energy are components of an existing or planned animal waste system.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC) individually. If used as a component of Aerobic Digester, shall not exceed \$95,000 for all components of installing the digester system.

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan. All manure/wastes on the farm must be applied to the land according to a comprehensive nutrient management plan. Landowner is responsible for obtaining all necessary permits prior to construction.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 25 years following installation.

WASTE STORAGE FACILITY 313 (Number)

Purpose: To temporarily store liquid or solid wastes as part of a pollution-control system to conserve nutrients and to protect the environment.

Applicability: Landowner is responsible for obtaining all necessary permits prior to construction or installation. This practice applies where: (1) the structure is a component of an overall plan prepared according to NRCS standard for waste management systems (213); (2) temporary storage is needed for organic wastes generated by agricultural production or processing; (3) the structure can be located without polluting air or water resources; and (4) soils and topography are suitable for construction of the structure. Wastes from sources such as canneries require special design considerations due to the content and volume of the leachate. Note: When EQIP is used to cost share on waste storage facilities (solid waste) the planner must plan for using 100% of the generated waste, but in South Carolina we will only cost-share on storing a maximum of 50% of the waste. The planner should explore crop alternatives to increase land application efficiency when the cleanout is conducted. An operation and maintenance plan is required which includes the following statement: *“The waste storage facility will be used only for waste storage. Waste handling or related equipment may be temporarily stored in the facility, but only during times when this facility is not needed for waste storage. Under no circumstances will waste be stored outside the structure unless the structure is full.”*

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan. All manure/wastes on the farm must be applied to the land according to a comprehensive nutrient management plan. Landowner is responsible for obtaining all necessary permits prior to construction.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 15 years following installation.

WATER & SEDIMENT CONTROL BASIN 638 (Number)

Purpose: To improve farmability of sloping land, reduce watercourse and gully erosion, trap sediment, reduce and manage onsite and downstream runoff, and improve downstream water quality.

Applicability: This practice applies where: (1) the topography is generally irregular; (2) watercourse and gully erosion are a problem; (3) sheet and rill erosion are controlled by other conservation practices; (4) runoff and sediment damage land and improvements; (5) soil and site conditions are suitable; and (6) adequate outlets are available or can be provided.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for lifespan of 10 years following installation.

WATERING FACILITY 614 (Number)

Purpose: To provide water facilities for livestock at selected locations that will protect and enhance vegetative cover through proper distribution of grazing. Another purpose on some sites is to reduce or eliminate the need for livestock to have access to streams.

Tanks and troughs are facilitating practices on grazing lands that must support the implementation of a prescribed grazing system. This practice applies where there is a need for new or improved watering places to permit the desired level of grassland management, to reduce health hazards for livestock, and to reduce livestock waste in streams.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Components: 1) LOW – Other; 2) MEDIUM – Concrete; 3) HIGH – Freeze free waterers

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 10 years following practice installation.

WATER WELL 642 (Feet)

Purpose: To supply water for livestock.

Applicability: A well constructed to provide water for livestock must support a grazing plan that meets the Prescribed Grazing (528A) standard.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC)

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan. Well construction must conform to the practice standard for WATER WELL and also must meet SCDHEC regulations and permitting.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 20 years after establishment.

WELL DECOMMISSIONING 351 (Number)

Purpose: To protect groundwater from contamination by inflow of surface water.

Applicability: Where abandoned wells pose a threat to groundwater. Cost sharing intended to cover costs of materials and labor to seal abandoned well. See Well (642) standard for technical specifications.

Cost-share rate: 50% of average cost (AC) cost share based on 4-inch or 6-inch wells.

Limitations: Cost-sharing is limited to installing the conservation practice to the extent necessary to meet the resource concerns addressed by the conservation plan. Sealing must conform to SC DHEC Regulations. Cost sharing is only authorized for sealing abandoned hand dug or drilled water wells.

Maintenance: Practice will be maintained for a lifespan of 20 years after establishment.

Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans:

Situation: Poultry producer has an EQIP Contract that contains a line item for a Waste Storage Facility (Stacking Shed), Code 313. Producer's Conservation Plan requires him to develop and implement a CNMP. Producer is operating under SCDHEC permit. Producer desires to begin construction of the Stacking Shed as soon as possible.

Q1. Can NRCS give the Producer the construction drawings and specifications for the Stacking Shed prior to the development of the CNMP?

A1. Yes

Q2. What documentation should NRCS provide the Producer for his application for permit to construct from SCDHEC?

A2. Copy of Addendum to Waste Management Plan, Site Location Map, and signed Construction Drawings and Specifications.

Q3. If NRCS provides technical assistance for construction of the building, will NRCS be required to develop the CNMP?

A3. Not necessarily. CNMP development can be contracted to one of the TSP firms, depending upon priority of project and availability of funds.

Q4. Can the Producer receive cost share payment for the building prior to implementing the CNMP?

A4. No. The CNMP must be developed prior to making any payments under the EQIP contract. Though development of the CNMP prior to signing of the contract is not required, sufficient work shall be completed to insure the feasibility of a CNMP for the operation and the compatibility between the contract and the CNMP. (See attached letter sent out under Ronnie's signature, January 17, 2003)

From National Policy – Section 555.111 Contract Requirements

A CNMP must be developed *prior to* the implementation of a waste storage/treatment facility. CNMP implementation is to be completed no later than three years after the installation of the waste storage or treatment facility, unless an approved waiver is granted by the State Conservationist.

Thus, unless the State Conservationist desired to approve a waiver for each of the systems, national policy will not allow payment prior to CNMP development. Please correct me if I am wrong.

Q5. If the CNMP, developed post construction, shows that a smaller/larger structure than estimated in the contract line item is needed, must the contract cost share quantity be revised down/up?

A5. Yes. The producer should understand that since the plan has not been developed he is taking a chance of under / over sizing the structure. And the actual cost-share will be based upon what the plan shows. He is welcome to go ahead and build but that is the chance he is taking.

Q6. (If answer to Q5 is Yes, add Q6.) Will the Producer be required to refund "over payment"?

A6. Yes.

Q7. (If answer to Q6 is Yes, add Q7.) How to we document that the Producer is aware of the possibility that he may be required to refund "over payment"?

A7. We should include a statement with the contract signature that states that the cost-share / incentive payment received will be based upon the need as determined by the CNMP. He is already required to sign a statement that states " I hereby certify that in accordance with the policy of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) I will develop and implement a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) approved by NRCS. I further understand that failure to adhere the CNMP is a violation of my EQIP contract."

We can add the following statement to what the producer signs. Structures included in the CNMP will be based upon the storage / treatment needs as determined in the plan. Incentive payments will be based upon this need determination. If the producer chooses to build based upon preliminary contract information, the payment shall be adjusted upon completion of the CNMP. If an "overpayment" occurs the producer shall refund the overpayment. If "underpayment" occurs USDA-NRCS shall provide payment up to the conditions of the contract.

Q8. (If answer to Q6 is Yes, add Q8.) Will the documentation in A7 prevent the Producer from filing a claim against NRCS and the person giving technical assistance, individually and collectively?

A8. No. The claim will probably be a tort claim against NRCS since NRCS has deeper pockets. If the individual has followed agency policy and the guidelines in these Q & A's, that person was working within the scope of his/her employment and the agency will seek to dismiss the claim against the individual.