

For: State and County Offices

Announcing Preliminary Farm Bill Provisions

Approved by: Acting Deputy Administrator, Farm Programs



1 Overview

A

Background

President Bush signed the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (the Act) on May 13, 2002.

B

Purpose

This notice provides a brief overview of the Act’s Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) related provisions.

2 CRP-Related Provisions

A

New Cropping History Provision

CCC may make land eligible for CRP that has been cropped or considered to be cropped for 4 of the 6 years preceding the Act’s enactment.

B

New “Net Savings” Provision

CCC may make certain cropland eligible for CRP if enrollment would facilitate a net savings in groundwater or surface water resources of a producer’s agriculture operation.

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<p>Disposal Date</p> <p>January 1, 2003</p>	<p>Distribution</p> <p>State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices and NRCS State Offices</p>
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2 CRP-Related Provisions (Continued)

C

New Buffer Size Provision

CCC may make certain land eligible for CRP if more than 50 percent of the land in the field is enrolled in CRP as a buffer and the remainder of the field is infeasible to farm. This land may be enrolled at the weighted average soil rental rate.

D

Temporary Modified WBP Eligibility

CCC may make eligible certain Water Bank Program (WBP) land if the WBP contract expired or will expire during calendar year 2000, 2001, or 2002.

E

1 Year Extension for Certain Hardwood Tree

CCC may extend, for 1 year, certain hardwood tree contracts scheduled to expire during calendar year 2002.

F

Expanded Farmable Wetlands Pilot Program (FWPP)

CCC may:

- expand FWPP to all States with eligible land up to 1 million acres with no more than 100,000 acres in any State subject to further review within 3 years
 - make eligible 10 contiguous acres for FWPP of which not more than 5 acres shall be eligible for payment.
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G

Expiring Contracts Eligible

CCC may make eligible the land subject to a CRP contract eligible to be considered for re-enrollment.

H

Managed Haying and Grazing

CCC may authorize managed haying and grazing, including managed harvesting of biomass, of certain CRP acreage subject to a payment reduction.

I

Wind Turbines

CCC may permit installing wind turbines within certain limitations.

J

Economic Effects Study

A study of the economic and social effects on rural effects resulting from CRP is required within 18 months of the Act's enactment.

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3 Action

A National Office Action

Policy and guidance will be developed to implement provisions of the Act. The process will include the following:

- meeting with interested farm, commodity, conservation, and environmental groups
 - meeting with interested Members of Congress
 - convening a multi-Agency working group, which includes representatives of State and County Offices, to develop issues for revised polices, guidance, and the Environmental Benefits Index
 - preparing necessary environmental review and Federal Register documents to implement any revised provisions
 - developing user requirements for KCAO
 - conducting appropriate National training.
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B State and County Office Action

State and County Offices shall:

- familiarize themselves with the provisions of this notice
 - use the provisions of this notice when responding to producer questions
 - make sure producers understand that the provisions of this notice:
 - are informational only
 - are subject to interpretation
 - do not include policy decisions
 - will be supplemented with final policy at the appropriate time.
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