



## **USDA Announces Increase to Certain Incentive Payments for Continuous Conservation Reserve Program**

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**WASHINGTON, Dec. 9, 2020** - The U.S. Department of Agriculture is increasing incentive payments for practices installed on land enrolled in the Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is upping the Practice Incentive Payment for installing practices, from 5 percent to 20 percent. Additionally, producers will receive a 10 percent incentive payment for water quality practices on land enrolled in CRP's continuous signup. FSA administers CRP on behalf of the Commodity Credit Corporation.

"The Conservation Reserve Program provides agricultural producers and landowners with a tool to conserve natural resources on their land that is less suitable for farming," said FSA Administrator Richard Fordyce. "We offer a number of CRP initiatives, including continuous CRP, which greatly benefits natural resources like water. Increasing the incentive payment gives farmers even more reason to participate in continuous CRP, one of our nation's largest conservation endeavors."

Under continuous CRP, producers can enroll environmentally sensitive land devoted to certain conservation practices with signup available at any time. FSA automatically accepts offers provided the land and producer meet certain eligibility requirements and the enrollment levels do not exceed the number of acres FSA is allowed to enroll in CRP, which was set by the 2018 Farm Bill.

Signed into law in 1985, CRP is one of the largest private-lands conservation programs in the United States. It was originally intended primarily to control soil erosion and potentially stabilize commodity prices by taking marginal lands out of production. The program has evolved over the years, providing many conservation and economic benefits. The program marks its 35-year anniversary this month. Program successes include:

- Preventing more than 9 billion tons of soil from eroding, which is enough soil to fill 600 million dump trucks;
- Reducing nitrogen and phosphorous runoff relative to annually tilled cropland by 95% and 85%, respectively;
- Sequestering an annual average of 49 million tons of greenhouse gases, equal to taking 9 million cars off the road;
- Creating more than 3 million acres of restored wetlands while protecting more than 175,000 stream miles with riparian forest and grass buffers, which is enough to go around the world seven times; and

- Benefiting bees and other pollinators and increasing populations of ducks, pheasants, turkey, bobwhite quail, prairie chickens, grasshopper sparrows and many other birds.

The successes of CRP contribute to USDA's [Agriculture Innovation Agenda](#) and its goal of reducing the environmental footprint of U.S. agriculture by half by 2050. Earlier this year, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue announced the Department-wide initiative to align resources, programs, and research to position American agriculture to better meet future global demands.

For more information on CRP, visit [fsa.usda.gov](https://fsa.usda.gov), or contact your [local FSA county office](#).

All USDA Service Centers are open for business, including those that restrict in-person visits or require appointments. All Service Center visitors wishing to conduct business with FSA, Natural Resources Conservation Service or any other Service Center agency should call ahead and schedule an appointment. Service Centers that are open for appointments will pre-screen visitors based on health concerns or recent travel, and visitors must adhere to social distancing guidelines. Visitors are also required to wear a face covering during their appointment. Our program delivery staff will continue to work with our producers by phone, email, and using online tools. More information can be found at [farmers.gov/coronavirus](https://farmers.gov/coronavirus).

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