



About Participating in the Conservation Security Program

Cropland

CSP is a unique new program that offers payments for topnotch conservation farmers and ranchers. Unlike other programs that help producers fix resource problems, CSP rewards those who already act as model conservationists. It also pays qualified producers to do further environmental enhancements, such as additional conservation treatments, evaluation, on-farm demonstrations and more.



Testing plant tissue and/or soil to determine fertilization needs and to apply nutrients accordingly helps prevent overuse and protects water sources.



Participating in a watershed project to test and improve water quality is one type of possible conservation enhancement eligible under CSP

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

CSP is a three-tiered program with different requirements for each tier. All CSP producers, regardless of the tier at which they participate, must ultimately address minimum treatment criteria for soil quality and water quality. Techniques to achieve these soil and water criteria will vary depending on your farms slope, climate, soil texture and other characteristics.

Typically, sound resource management will include activities such as those shown below and will result in fertile soil with valuable organic matter that is protected from erosion. Additionally, pesticides and nutrients will be managed to help keep surface and groundwater clean to protect human and environmental health. Consider this checklist. Do you currently...

- **Rotate your crops?**
- **Control erosion or soil loss?**
- **Use buffers to protect water sources?**
- **Test soils and apply fertilizers accordingly?**
- **Keep records of fertilizer and pesticide applications?**
- **If irrigated, schedule applications based on crop needs?**
- **Are you willing to pursue additional conservation enhancements?**

Producers in the Blue Earth River Watershed may qualify for CSP if they are addressing natural resource concerns by:

- * **Using mulch till or a reduced tillage system that leaves crop residues on the soil surface**
- * **Applying fertilizer according to University of MN Extension Service recommendations**
- * **Collecting soil test information and keeping records of fertilizer and pesticide applications**
- * **Controlling soil erosion including drainage ways subject to wash outs after rain storms**
- * **Pursuing additional conservation enhancements**