

Funding Available for Organic Farmers

The Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)

Background Information:

Federal funding is available to help agricultural producers transition to an organic system of production! As part of the larger \$300 million USDA Organic Transition Initiative, the Transition to Organic Partnership Program (TOPP) aims to help producers adopt organic management systems in pursuit of certification.

Program Highlight: [Environmental Quality Incentives Program \(EQIP\)](#)

The EQIP program from the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) offers a variety of technical and financial assistance opportunities for farmers and ranchers including the [High Tunnel Initiative](#), an [On Farm Energy Initiative](#), and the [Organic Initiative](#).

Who is eligible?



Eligible Applicants: Agricultural producers with ownership or control of their land; Owners of non-industrial private forestland; Federally Recognized Tribes; Those interested in establishing agricultural/forestry operations; Water management entities.



Eligible Lands: Cropland and hayland; Rangeland; Pastureland; Non-industrial private forestland; Other farm or ranch lands; Environmentally sensitive areas.

** Historically Underserved (HU) participants are [eligible for increased payment rates and advanced payments](#) to offset the costs of purchasing goods or services. HU participants include socially disadvantaged, beginning, veteran and [limited resource farmers and ranchers](#).*

What are you eligible to receive?



Consultation from a local NRCS conservation planner to develop your conservation plan.



Technical and financial assistance for developing conservation plans and for the labor, materials and implementation of management practices in your plan.

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A PDF version with hyperlinks, along with other resources on other programs that support organic production, is available here:

<https://ofrf.org/news/topp-west-resources/>



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How can you apply for this program?

First, it's always a good idea to review some materials.

1

- ☀ Check out this helpful guide to learn about how USDA works with farmers & ranchers: [Get Started! A Guide to USDA Programs for Historically Underserved Farmers and Ranchers](#)
- ☀ This [EQIP USDA website](#) has some general information and this [USDA EQIP Fact Sheet](#).

2

Find the right application.

Apply through your [regional NRCS office](#) following the [provided instructions](#). Applications are accepted on a continuous basis, but deadlines and available EQIP initiatives vary by state and county.

3

Provide the financial information required to gain access to government payments.

- ☀ Applicants must be registered with [Farmers.gov](#). Members' farm records must be up to date.
- ☀ Applicants must [provide adjusted gross income certification](#) (Form [CCC-941](#)), which requires applicants' Taxpayer ID Number (SSN or EIN) and their Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) from the previous 3 tax years.

4

Provide the required documents.

- ☀ All applicants must provide control of land documentation (deed, proof of land ownership, lease, or other legal agreement).
- ☀ Applicants must provide written authorization from the landowner to install structural or vegetative practices on leased land included in the application.
- ☀ For certified organic applicants only, NRCS requires proof of certification for the CPA 1200.
- ☀ If a conservation project involves irrigation, documentation of the land's irrigation history is required.

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Submit! Send all of this information to the correct state or federal agency office.

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